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LECTURE

OF

"Of old
Thy hand

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BIBLICAL EXPOSITOR

AND

PEOPLE'S COMMENTARY.

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL COMMENTARY
ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

BY

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VOL. II.

"Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of
Thy hands."—PSALM cii. 23.

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TORONTO:
ROWSSELL & HUTCHISON.

1885.

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INTRODUCTION.

The original names of the five books of Moses are merely derived from the principal word of the first verse of each book. Thus, the first book is called בְּרֵאשִׁית (*Bereshith*), i. e., *in the beginning*, which is the first word of the book. When the Greek version was executed, the translators gave names to the books expressive of the chief event recorded in each book. Thus they called the first book GENESIS, i. e., *generation or production*. The second book they named EXODUS, i. e., *departure*, the principal event related in the book being the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. The third book they named LEVITICUS, as it contains chiefly the laws relating to the priests and Levites. The fourth book they called Ἀριθμοί (*Arithmoi*), and in the Vulgate it bears the name NUMERI, which is a literal translation of the Greek word, and hence the name NUMBERS in our version. It is so called in reference to the numbering of the children of Israel as related in chapters i., ii., iii., and xxvi. The fifth book they called DEUTERONOMION, i. e., *the second law*, because it contains a *repetition* of the laws given to Moses, with the exception to what pertains to the priesthood; and hence the name Deuteronomy in our version.

The book of Genesis, although only containing fifty chapters, yet comprises the history ranging over 2,369 years, according to the common computation, or 3,619 years according to the Septuagint, which is also adopted by Bishop Hales, who, however, stands alone in this respect.

Some writers suppose that Moses wrote the book in the land of Midian, when he tended the flocks of his father-in-law in the wilderness; but it is far more likely that it was not written until after the promulgation of the law in the wilderness; this is, however, a matter of no consequence.

The Mosaic authorship and inspiration of the book of Genesis has never been doubted by the ancient Jews. It was by them received with a full conviction of its truth, on the authority of that inspiration under which the sacred historian was known to act. Indeed, the book itself bears incontrovertible evidence of being written under inspiration—as we shall hereafter point out—since we find things recorded in it about the nature of which Moses must at that time have been perfectly ignorant, and could not possibly have obtained the information otherwise than by inspiration. The sacred authority of the book is also

established by its being so frequently cited in the New Testament. See Matt. xxiv. 37, 38; Luke i. 55; xvii. 28, 29, 32; Acts vii. 2-16; Rom. iv. 1-3; Gal. iii. 8; James ii. 23. On account of the sacredness and dignity of the subject, and the serious attention which it demands, the reading of the beginning of Genesis, among the ancient Jews, was not allowed until they had attained the sacerdotal age of thirty years.

The historical portions of the book bear the stamp of truthfulness by the manner they are related. The events are described as they occurred, and the characters as they appeared, there is not the slightest desire evinced to shield from blame, or to conceal any wrong doing. Whether we view the book of Genesis from a religious point of view, or from a secular standpoint, language fails in adequately describing the importance of the information it contains. Here we learn the fundamental truth that God is the Creator of the universe and all that it contains, that—

"The heavens declare the glory of God,
And the firmament show forth the works of his hands."

Psalms xix. 2; Eng. Vers. v. 1.

Here we learn further, that man is not the outcome of a long and gradual development from an inferior creature, but a creature created in the image of his Maker, possessing an immortal soul; and that the human race, irrespective of colour, sprang from one primitive pair, and are all alike protected and guided by the care of a Heavenly Father. Here too, is furnished the all important information, how sin and the consequent evils it entailed upon the human race, entered into the world. The sacred narrative, after having given these fundamental truths, which, form the basis of all Scriptural doctrine, describes the multiplication of mankind, the progress of impiety, the preservation of Noah and his family from amidst the general destruction by the flood. The sacred narrative next proceeds to give a brief, but authentic record of the descent, the diffusion, and progress of the various nations that inhabit the earth. It furnishes, also, the important information of the confusion of tongues, which, although it may not altogether solve the difficult problem as to the origin of the many different languages now spoken upon the globe, yet, it will, at least, afford a key to it which no human being, or ingenuity could ever have discovered. The Biblical narrative next gives an account of the solemn covenant made with Abraham, which may be regarded as the beginning of the *theocracy*, and also records the most important events in the lives of the Patriarchs, especially those that were best calculated to illustrate the dealings of God with man and His

judgments, and concludes with the beautiful and interesting history of Joseph, and the settlement of the Israelites in Egypt. Thus we have in the book of Genesis a concise, but clear history of the first ages of the human family, which profane writers would never have been able to rescue from the shades of antiquity. A writer has well said that "the views set forth in the book of Genesis have not only become the foundation of the culture of the Hebrews, but, through them, of a large portion of mankind." Most of the statements made in Genesis have, however, not been allowed to go unchallenged. Indeed, modern criticism has chosen the book as the battlefield upon which the warfare against the authenticity of the Pentateuch is chiefly to be carried on. Any one acquainted with modern Biblical literature must know that the battle has been severe, and is by no means yet ended. The miraculous events are held to set forth impossibilities, whilst many of the historical statements are pronounced to be unreliable. The use of the different names of the Deity in certain portions of the book are laid hold of to prove that those portions were written by different authors, and at long intervals between them. It is of no use evading the objections of modern critics, they must be met in a fair and unbiased manner. Most, if not all Biblical critics belonging to the rationalistic school are eminent scholars, and, no doubt, sincerely believe to be correct in their conclusions. No one either can, for a moment, charge them with writing their commentaries for mercenary purposes, they are, evidently, actuated by a higher motive, namely: a love for the subject. I have, therefore, always been careful in controverting any argument, never to use harsh, much less, offensive language, like some writers have done. It will be my earnest endeavour, in the following pages, to carefully examine all the objections urged by modern critics against various portions of Genesis, and to controvert them by sound arguments and common sense reasoning, and leave the intelligent and unbiased reader to judge whether I have been successful in my endeavours. Should I, in the opinion of some of my readers, not have entirely succeeded in clearing up all the difficulties which necessarily beset subjects so profound, and of such a mysterious nature as are contained in Genesis, I trust they will ascribe it rather to my inability to do so, and not to the sacred narrative as containing anything adverse to the teaching of the natural sciences or to the dictates of reason.

Those of my readers who are not acquainted with Hebrew, will naturally feel anxious to know whether the *new renderings* given in the "*Revised Version*" are an improvement upon the *Authorized Version*. It is, therefore, my intention, as soon as that version is published, to notice all the changes that have

been made, and to express my opinion whether in approval or otherwise, stating, at the same time, my reason for favouring one rendering in preference to the other.

I may repeat here the statement already made in the introduction, that the translation is directly made from the Hebrew, but I have carefully avoided deviating from the Authorized Version, except where I thought it absolutely necessary.

Such portions as are correctly translated, and do not call for any explanation are passed over.

In the present advanced state of Biblical criticism, it is impossible to write a satisfactory commentary without frequently quoting the original. The reader will, however, find the Hebrew words in no way to interfere with the reading, as they are invariably expressed in English characters. Those of my readers, who are not acquainted with the Hebrew, will, in some cases, in order to understand the arguments, *have to pay particular attention to the Hebrew words expressed in English. This is especially the case where the derivation of words are given.*

I have always made it a practice to make the Bible as much as possible its own interpreter, that is to say, wherever the sense of a phrase, or the meaning of a word is doubtful, to endeavour to find the true sense or meaning in other places, where the same phrase or word occurs. Many of the mistranslations in the Authorized Version would have been avoided had the translators strictly adhered to this practice. In the Old Testament there are many words which occur only *once*, in all such cases I have always resorted to the cognate languages or the Rabbinical writings, in order to trace the true import.

I have spared no labour to render the work in every respect both useful and interesting; but how far I may have succeeded in these endeavours, remains for the reader to decide. In a work of this kind, it can hardly be hoped to give general satisfaction; what may please one, may displease another. Pope has justly said, in his "Essay on Criticism,"—

"Tis with our judgments as our watches; none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own."

This is quite true, judgments once formed are not always so easily relinquished, preconceived opinions become often so deeply rooted that they are with difficulty eradicated; still, when facts prove these to be wrong, there is no other alternative than to offer them on the shrine of truth.

But whatever the public verdict regarding the work may be, I have at least the satisfaction of knowing, that my whole endeavours have been to perform the by no means easy task to the best of my abilities, and with the strictest impartiality.

J. M. H.

COMMENTARY.

"O'er the wide universe no atom stir'd,
Silence and gloom in awful grandeur reign,
The world was theirs :—One limitless domain,
Till earth's Great Builder gave the forming word,—
Tro' boundless chaos was the mandate heard,—
Creation snapt its adamantine chain,
And sprung into being. On the new born plain
Alternate changes Deity conferred."

GENESIS I.

1. "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*"

The sacred writer begins his narrative by setting forth the grand fundamental truth, that "God in the beginning," or more literally rendered "in beginning," created the *whole universe*; for this is in reality the meaning of the expression "heaven and earth" according to the Hebrew idiom, and in this sense it is used by the other sacred writers throughout the Old Testament. Thus Melchizedek in blessing Abram said: "Blessed be Abram of the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth;" i. e., of the whole universe. (Gen. xiv. 19).

This at once affords a conclusive argument against the allegation made by some modern writers that "Moses, in using the expression in question, betrays an ignorance which is not consonant with that of an inspired writer, inasmuch as he mentions *the earth* separately, whilst in reality it forms a component part of the planetary system, and, therefore, is already included in the term heaven." The sacred writer, however, made use of the *only mode* of expression that the Hebrew language afforded, had he invented a term for it, no one would have understood him. Moses combats here also the extravagant notions that prevailed amongst the ancient pagans in regard to the origin of the world, and especially the widely spread theory among the ancient sages of the *eternity of heaven and earth*.

That Moses must have received the information by Divine inspiration is self-evident, since the human mind could not possibly have conceived such an idea, it being altogether beyond the grasp of the human understanding to conceive how anything could be created out of *nothing*. It declares quite the opposite to what was held by the most learned heathen philosophers, who laid down the doctrine, "*ex nihilo nihil fit*,"

i. e., "out of nothing—nothing comes." If, then, it must be admitted, that the first verse was written under Divine inspiration, it follows that the remaining portion of the narrative must have likewise been so written, since it equally speaks of creations out of nothing. The language, too, which Moses employs, stamps his record with the Divine signet, "and God said," "and God saw," "and God called," are expressions which would not have been employed by the holy and meek lawgiver of the Hebrews, without having Divine authority to do so. It is, therefore, simply impious to say that the Bible merely "furnishes here the history of creation, such as it was able to give, without regard to the possible future discoveries in physical sciences." (See Kalisch, Commentary on Genesis, p. 51).

The names* of the Deity employed in the Old Testament are expressive of the different attributes of God, as *self-existence, might, rule, or government*; the term used throughout this chapter is אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) which expresses the attribute of *might*, and is evidently designedly used by the sacred writer, since in the creation of the universe God pre-eminently displayed His almighty power.

But our verse does not only teach that God is the Creator of the universe; and therefore, also the Author of the laws that govern the universe, but it implies further that He is self-existing, eternal, omnipresent; in fact the declaration contained in it embraces a subject so vast, that the human mind staggers in its attempt to grasp it, and yet, it is conveyed to us in the original in seven words, and in language so simple that even the most uneducated may readily comprehend its meaning, so far as God intended that so profound a mystery should be understood by finite beings. Men who endeavour to pass the boundary set by the Almighty, would do well to ponder on the words of Eliphaz, the Temanite:

"He taketh the wise in their own craftiness :
And the counsel of the cunning is precipitate.
In the day time they meet with darkness (therefore fruitless,)
And grope at noonday as in the darkness."

Job v. 13, 14.

Some writers, and among them Professor Lewis, of Union College, in his work entitled "The Six Days of Creation, or the Scriptural Cosmology," have argued that the verb "בָּרָא" (*bara*) "created" employed in the first verse, does not necessarily denote *to create out of nothing*, since it is also used in the sense *to hew, to cut down*, as Josh. xvii. 15 and *to form* as Ezek. xxi. 24 (Eng. vers. 19). This is no doubt quite true; but Moses had to

* These will be more fully explained hereafter.

use some word which would convey the meaning *to create out of nothing*; and I maintain, that this is the only word he could possibly have employed, as there is no other in the Hebrew language which would have afforded that sense. Why did these authors not point out what verb the sacred writer could have used which would have been more suitable? It is, however, quite evident, that the argument is put forward without any regard to the usage of the verb in Scripture. The verb בָּרָא (*bara*) in the primary conjugation *Kal*, is only employed in the sense *to create*, and only in reference to Divine creation. Hence this verb is always employed when God is spoken of as creating a *new thing* such as never before had any existence. Thus we read, Numb. xvi. 30, "But if the Lord בְּרִיאָה יִבְרָא (*beriah yivra*) will create a new (or unheard of) thing." Those who are acquainted with Hebrew, will perceive that the noun itself is derived from the same verb, so that the literal rendering of the passage in reality is, *will create a created thing*. So also Jer. xxxi. 22, "For the LORD had created a new thing in the earth." Is. lxv. 17, "For, behold I am creating a new heavens and a new earth." And hence the participle of this conjugation, is used substantively in reference to God as Creator, "Remember בּוֹרֵאךְ (*bore'echa*) thy Creator." (Eccl. xii. 1.)

It is only in the derivative conjugation *Piel* that the verb, in a few instances is used in the sense *to cut, to hew, to form*, but even in those cases the preëxisting material is also mentioned.

In 2 Maccab. vii. 28, occur the following words: "I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that do not exist," i. e., from nothing previously existing. St. Paul, Hebrews xi. 3, says: "By faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen, were not made from those which do appear." Indeed, no other meaning was ever attached to Genesis i. 1, by the ancient Jewish Church, than that given by St. Paul. Many of the most eminent Rabbis have rendered the verse: God, in the beginning, created the substance of the heaven, and the substance of the earth.*

The first verse then distinctly sets forth two fundamental truths, that the universe hath both a *beginning* and a *Creator*, but as to when that beginning was, or what length of time elapsed between that creation, and the beginning of the Mosaic six days' creation, in which the earth was rendered fit for the

* The Rabbis who render the verse in that way, have taken אֶת (*eth*), which we regard as the sign of the accusative as a noun in the sense of *substance*. Compare Eben Ezra; Kimehi, in his "Book of Roots," and Buxdorf's Talmudic Lexicon.

reception of mankind, and was again replenished with various plants and animals. God has not vouchsafed to inform us. Naturalists say, myriads of years are required to form the various strata: be it so, the sacred writer does not say one word to the contrary. Kurz, a well-known and esteemed German writer, very pertinently remarks, that: "Between the first and second, and between the second and third verses of the Biblical history of the creation, revelation leaves two great white pages, on which human science may write what it will, in order to fill up the blanks of natural history which revelation omitted itself to supply, as not being its office."

"Of each of these *carte blanche* revelation has only given a superscription, a summary table of contents. The first runs: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," * * The second *carte blanche* has the summary inscription: "the earth was void and waste, and the spirit of God was brooding on the face of the waters." (Kurz, Biebel, and Astronomie, p. 433.) I beg to draw the readers' particular attention to the above remarks of Kurz, as they will greatly assist in the illustration of this most difficult of all Biblical subjects.

Dr. Harris, President of Chestnut College, remarks: "From a careful consideration of the subject, my full conviction is, that the verse just quoted," (*i. e.*, Genesis i. 1), "was placed by the hand of inspiration at the opening of the Bible, as a Divine intention to affirm by it, that the material world was primarily originated by God from elements not previously existing, and that this originating act was distinct from the acts included in the six natural days of the Adamic creation.* And so a host of most eminent writers might be adduced who expressed similar views.

And this opinion cannot be said to have originated with modern writers, it has already been held by St. Gregory Nazianzen, Justin Martyr, St. Basil, St. Cæsarius, Origen, Augustine, Theodoret, Episcopus; all these maintained "the existence of a long interval between the creation spoken of in the first verse of Genesis, and that of which an account is given in the third and following verses.†

Taking it for granted, then, that the first verse forms "a distinct and independent sentence"—a theory which certainly cannot fail to recommend itself at once to our favourable consideration, for it furnishes, on the one hand, lavishly as much time as the naturalists require, whilst, on the other hand,

* The Preadamite Earth, p. 75.

† See Cardinal Wiseman's Lectures on the connection between Science and Revealed Religion, vol. I. p. 288, 4th Ed. Also, note in Buckland's Bridge-water Treatise, by Dr. Pusey, who refers to Petavius, Lib. C, ch. 11, sec. 1-6, and Dr. J. Pye Smith's Scripture and Geology, pp. 179, 180.

it tends to harmonize the Mosaic account without imposing forced constructions on the very plain language of the sacred writer—as will become more and more apparent as we proceed with the explanation of the chapter—we may next inquire what science has revealed to inscribe on the first *carte blanche* of which that verse merely forms “a superscription.”

Now it is an admitted fact by all naturalists, that “the vast geological scale divides itself into three great parts, and that in each part or master division we find a type of life so unlike that of others that even an unpractised eye can detect the difference.” Or, as the great French naturalist, M. D’Orbigny, has described it, “twenty-nine creations separated one from another by catastrophes which have swept away the species existing at the time, so that not a single species survived the last catastrophe which ended the tertiary period.” The reader will thus perceive, there is nothing, either in the vegetable or animal kingdom which, in any way, connects the *tertiary period* with the *fourth period*, which I shall call the *human period*, as being preëminently distinguished from the preceding ones by the creation of the human family.

As every successive period had its peculiar types of beings, hence it follows that there must have been, from time to time, new creations. But it will probably be asked, is that Scriptural? The question is best answered with the words of Christ, who himself declared, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” (St. John v. 17.) There is no *inactivity* on the part of God, for as the Psalmist says:

“Behold, He slumbers not, and He sleepeth not,
The Keeper of Israel.”

(Ps. cxxi. 4.)

Who can tell what new creations may not daily, hourly, nay momentarily, take place in the waters, upon the ground, or in space? We have already seen that new planets spring into existence, whilst others disappear from the astronomical chart. And the reader will, no doubt, remember the stinging sarcasm with which Keppler, one of the greatest astronomers of all ages, has treated the Epicurian theory as to the *chance origin* of these *new planets*. (See Introd. p. lxxxiii.)

If, then, it must be admitted that new creations must have taken place from time to time, for there is no other rational mode of accounting for the origin of the new types in the different geological periods, there can no longer be any objection on that score of applying Gen. 1 to the creation of the living things only which now inhabit our globe.

* The verbs are in the *future* which is always used to express a custom, practice, or continued action.

2. "And the earth was desolate and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

As we have already stated, this verse forms the superscription of the second *carte blanche*. It represents to us the dismal condition of our globe at the time when the Mosaic account of the creation commences. Every living thing in the animal and vegetable kingdom, had been swept away by the last *catastrophe* that ended the tertiary period, the whole earth had become a vast sea upon which darkness reigned supreme. How this globe had become submerged, and how long it had remained in that condition, the Almighty has not vouchsafed to inform us; such information, no doubt, might gratify the inquisitive, but forms no essential part of the narrative which follows, and the sacred writer, therefore, mentioned merely so much as was necessary to form a link to his account, in order to show why a new creation had become necessary.

Dr. Sumner has very pertinently remarked, "The account in Genesis may be briefly summed up in these three articles: first, that God was the original Creator of all things; secondly, that at the formation of the globe we inhabit the whole of its materials were in a state of chaos and confusion; thirdly, that at a period not exceeding 5000 years ago (5400)—whether we adopt the Hebrew or Septuagint chronology is immaterial—the whole earth underwent a mighty catastrophe, in which it was completely inundated by the immediate agency of the Deity. ("Records of Creation," vol. ii. p. 344). Quoted also by Cardinal Wiseman in his Lectures on "The Connection between Science and Revealed Religion. (vol. i. p. 280).

We must not omit to mention here, that the phrase רוח אלהים (*weruäch Elohim*) "and the Spirit of God" has by some writers been rendered by "a mighty wind," in accordance with a Hebrew idiom, by which a *superlative force* is frequently obtained by using one or other of the appellations of the Deity with a noun, which thus attributes to it the idea of the highest excellence, as נשיא אלהים (*nesie Elohim*) lit. *a prince of God*, i. e., "a mighty prince." Gen. xxiii. 3. ארזי אל (*arsee El*) lit. *the cedars of God*, i. e. "the finest cedars." (Psalm lxxx. 11; Eng. vers. v. 10). עצי יהוה (*atsee Jehovah*) lit. *the trees of Jehovah*, i. e., "the finest trees." (Ps. civ. 16). The word רוח (*ruäch*) too, denotes both *wind* and *spirit*; so that the reader will perceive that the rendering "a mighty wind" is not an arbitrary translation. But the phrase in question is never used idiomatically in Scripture to denote a *great* or *strong*

* See explanation given in the Introduction, p. xlix.

wind, in that case the adjective *great* is always employed, as Job i. 19; Jonah i. 4. Besides the rendering *mighty wind* would be altogether unsuitable with the verb מרחפת (*mera chepheth*) which denotes a gentle *hovering* or *brooding* over, such as is made by birds whilst hatching their eggs, or fostering their young, as Deut. xxxii. 11, where God is represented as lovingly watching over Israel's welfare "as an eagle fluttereth over her young." The true meaning of the passage, no doubt is, that the quickening Spirit of God brooded over the waters, to quicken the lifeless mass by His creative Spirit, which is the principle of all life. Hence the Psalmist says, "By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made; and by the breath of His mouth all their host." (Psalm xxxiii. 6). Milton has beautifully paraphrased the passage in question:

* * * "Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wing, outspread,
Dove like, satst brooding on the vast abyss,
And madest it pregnant." * * *

The celebrated Rabbi Nachman, in his Hebrew Commentary, entitled "Bereshith Rabba," interprets the phrase "this is the spirit of the King Messiah."

There is no doubt that in most of the eastern legends regarding the origin of the world, there are indications that some portions have been derived from the Mosaic account, although in a more or less disguised form. This is especially the case in the Hindoo cosmogony, according to which the *original soul* of the universe said, "I will create worlds," therefore the water was called into existence, into which the Spirit deposited a germ which developed itself into an egg of beautiful lustre, and in this egg the *supreme being* or *Brahman* created himself; the waters were called (Nara) *Spirit of God*, and as they were the first place where he had moved, he was designated (Narayana) *moving on the waters*. (Asiatic Researches, i. 244.)

3. "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

With these words the work of the six days of creation commenced, for it will be seen by glancing over the chapter, that the beginning of each day's creation is likewise distinctly marked by the words: "And God said,"* that is, God willed, for as Bishop Hall has very properly remarked, "God's *speaking* is His *willing*, and His *willing* is His *doing*. We need not therefore suppose that the words were actually uttered. The

* The Hebrew verb אמר (*amar*) is frequently used in the sense *to purpose to think*. Thus for example Exod. ii. 14 אהיה אמר (*attah omer*) "dost thou purpose to kill me?" See also 2 Sam. xxi. 18. And so in other places.

sacred writers in speaking of the acts of God, merely employ ordinary language in order to make their communications more readily understood by all.

The expression יְהִי אוֹר (*yehi or vaihi or*) "Light be, and light was," is exceedingly sublime; God merely commands, and it is. Hence the Psalmist says :

"For he spake and it was ;
He commanded, and it stood." (Ps. xxxiii. 9.)

Which is more fully expressed in the sixth verse :

"By the word of the LORD the heavens were made ;
And by the breath of His mouth all their hosts."

Luther, too, has beautifully said, "The words of God are not mere sounds, but essential objects." Even Dionysius Longinus, one of the most judicious Greek critics, and who is celebrated over the civilized world for a treatise entitled *Περὶ τῶν ὑψηλῶν* concerning the sublime; who although himself a heathen, yet speaks of this passage in the following terms: "So likewise the Jewish Lawgiver (who was no ordinary man) having conceived a just idea of the Divine power, he expressed it in a dignified manner: "LET THERE BE LIGHT! and there was light. LET THERE BE EARTH! and there was earth." (Longin. Sect. 8, Edit. 1662.)

The term אוֹר (*or*) *light* which is employed in this verse denotes the *element light*, and is quite a different word from that used in verse fourteen, by which *the luminaries* or *orbs* are expressed. The expression "light be," is merely equivalent to *let light appear*; had the sacred writer wished to convey the idea that light was then first created, he would have written *God created the light*. The darkness which reigned at the time upon the vast expanse of water, was the natural result from the absence of the light of the sun which was then not visible on account of the aqueous and aerial fluids by which our globe was surrounded. We shall hereafter show that the *luminaries* already existed, and hence it follows that the *element light* must have existed likewise, and, therefore, is not spoken of as being created. So, likewise, the *waters* that covered the earth are spoken of as already existing, there is no mention made of their being then created. At the command, "light be," the light burst through the darkness, though the sun did not become visible yet until the fourth day, when every obstacle to its shining forth in unclouded splendour was removed.

4. "And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided between the light and between the darkness."

The meaning of the words in the first clause is, that God impressed the seal of perfection upon the light. The Hebrew adjective *טוֹב* (*tov*) denotes not only good, but also *beautiful, pleasant, cheerful*.

Hitherto, there had been only darkness upon the face of the earth, but now "God separated between the light and the darkness," that is, henceforth, light and darkness were to succeed each other again in regular rotation of the earth around its axis. This, of course, would have been impossible unless the sun had already existed, and performed its natural functions.

5. *And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And it was evening, and it was morning, one day."*

The reason why "the light" was called *יוֹם* (*yom*) *day* must evidently be looked for in the etymology of the word. Unfortunately the derivation of the word cannot now be traced with any certainty. Very probably the term *יוֹם* (*yom*) may, as Gesenius has suggested, be merely a softened form of *יוֹחַם* (*yocham*); in that case it certainly would be derived from the verb (*yacham*) *to be warm, to glow with heat*, and the suitability of the designation would at once become apparent.

Whether this supposition, however, is correct or not, certain it is that some etymological reason existed why it was so called. There are many Hebrew words occurring in the Bible of which the derivation cannot now be traced with any degree of certainty. Words in languages will become obsolete, and that such should have been the case in a language of such high antiquity as the Hebrew is certainly nothing wonderful.

Why "the darkness" was called *לַיְלָה* (*layelah*) is even still more difficult to account for at present, as I am not aware of any existing root in Hebrew or its cognate languages which would afford a suitable derivation. The loss of these roots indicate the great antiquity of the Hebrew language. "And it was evening, and it was morning;" the evening is naturally first mentioned, as darkness preceded the light. Hence the Hebrews have always adopted this mode of reckoning the day of four-and-twenty hours, from evening to evening. In Leviticus xxiii. 32, it is distinctly commanded, "from evening to evening shall ye keep your Sabbath," and so all the festivals began from sunset of the previous evening.

The Hebrew term for *evening* is *ערב* (*erev*), from which the Greeks, no doubt, derived their *Ερεβος* (*Erebus*) by adding the Greek ending *os*, which they deified, and made with *night* the parent of all things. Hence, also, the name of the Carthaginian deity *Herebus*, whom they invoked as the god of dark-

nees. The Hebrew word is derived from the verb עָרַב (*arav*), to grow dark, in Syriac and Arabic the verb denotes also to set, and is used in reference to the setting of the sun. The term, therefore, properly denotes that part of time which intervenes between sunset and utter darkness. In the passage before us, however, it evidently embraces the time from sunset to break of day. The Hebrew term בֹּקֶר (*boker*) denotes a breaking forth, i. e., when the light breaks through the darkness, hence morning, but here employed to denote the time that intervenes between the breaking of day and the setting of the sun. Hence the Jews always divide the day into evening and morning. From the evening being mentioned before the morning, may have originated the custom among some tribes of reckoning the time after nights; and our expressions, sennight, (seven-nights) fortnight, (fourteen-nights) probably have had their origin from such a custom.

I would also draw the readers attention to the peculiarity that in the original, the article in the enumeration of the days of creation, is only used with the sixth day, the absence of the article with the other days seems to mark the creation as one creative act, though the work was spread over six days. In the original it reads: "one day," "second day," &c., and not "the first day," "the second day," except with the sixth day, when it is said: "And it was evening, and it was morning the sixth day."

6. "And God said, Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it be a dividing between the waters and the waters."

Though the light had burst through the darkness which had hitherto obscured it, still the waters yet held their dominion over the earth, nor had the sky yet become visible. It is, of course, impossible to form, even in the slightest degree, any adequate idea of the state of the atmosphere of that time. The aqueous atmosphere, and the waters which covered the earth, formed, as it would appear, one undivided mass, and it was the dividing of this mass which constituted the creative work of the second day.

The Hebrew term רָקִיעַ (*rakia*), rendered in our version by "firmament," properly denotes "expanse," something beaten or stretched out, hence the sky, which consists of condensed clouds, but assumes to the eye the appearance of a solid substance. So Plato, speaks of the ethereal heaven under the notion of *τασις*, i. e., extension from *τενω*, to extend, which corresponds to the Hebrew רָקִיעַ (*rakia*), expanse, from רָקַע (*raka*), to expand, to beat out. I would impress on the mind of the reader, that it is the usage of Scripture throughout the sacred volume to

describe things as they appear to the eyes, so as to bring them within the limits of the most humble understanding. Hence Moses represents, in verse 14, the sun, moon, and stars, as set in the expanse or firmament, although they are removed far beyond it, but simply because they appear so to the eyes of an observer from our globe. But it is simply absurd to charge Moses, or any other sacred writer, with ignorance, because they made use of such expressions. As well might we say that the world-renowned astronomer Herschel was ignorant of the first principles of astronomy because he made use of the phrases: "the sun rises," "the moon sets." These phrases are constantly made use of by every person, and originated no doubt from these orbs appearing to the eye *to rise* and *to set*. They are convenient expressions, and are readily understood by the most ignorant.

As the sacred writer wishes to convey the idea that the design of the "expanse," was to separate between the waters which are above, and those which are below, the Hebrew word *בְּתוֹךְ* (*bethoch*), is evidently here used in the sense of *between*. The Hebrew word has different shades of meanings, as *midst*, *within*, *between*, but *between* conveys here a more accurate idea, both of the situation and use of the "expanse."

"And let it be a dividing," the rendering in the English version, "and let it divide," is a free translation, which might lead to the supposition that the dividing process was then finished. The original, on the contrary, by employing the *participle*, conveys the idea of a process constantly going on as implanted in nature. The participle in Hebrew, when used as a substantive, implies continued action; *לִמְדָּה* (*lomed*), *teaching*, hence also one *who constantly teaches*, and thus a *teacher*.

By the Divine act of "dividing between the waters and the waters," one portion of the watery mass was made to rise into the atmosphere, and held in solution, or made to float in the form of clouds, whilst the other portion was forced down in contact with our globe.

7. "So God ordained (or constituted) the expanse, and caused to divide between the waters which are under the expanse, and between the waters which are above the expanse: and it was so."

This verse is a mere continuation of the preceding verse, as much as to say, in this manner God constituted the "expanse," and caused the waters to divide themselves. The conjunction *וַ* (*wav*) *and*, is often used in the sense of *so* or *so then* with subordinate clauses. Thus, for example, in verse 26. "And God said, let us make man," &c.; hence verse 27 which is a continuation of the preceding verse begins. "So God created man,"

where it will be seen the ׀ (*wav*) conjunction is rendered in the English version by "So." In Hebrew the verb *to be*, when used as a copula is not expressed, hence it is so frequently printed in italics in the English version. In this verse it is better therefore to supply *are*, and read, "which *are* under the expanse," and "which *are* above the expanse," instead of *were* as in the English version, for the "expanse" could not have been the first means of dividing the waters, if a portion had already been above and another below.

The expression, "the waters which *are* above the expanse," does not refer to a *celestial ocean*, as Gesenius and other writers hold, but refers merely to the waters which float in the atmosphere; they are here only described in popular language to be "above the expanse," although strictly speaking, they are at no great elevation from the earth, still they are above that part of space in which birds fly.

"And it was so," that is, it was just as God willed it to be, perfect in every respect.

8. "And God called the expanse *Heaven*. And it was evening, and it was morning ; second day."

The term שָׁמַיִם (*Shamayim*) *heaven*, is merely another name by which the *expanse* is designated; it denotes in fact, the whole visible expanse, including the regions of the stars, which as already hinted, are merely said to be set in it, because they appear so to the eye, as well as the space in which vapours float, and clouds are formed. Hence the birds that fly in it are called "the fowl of the heaven," in verse 26. In it also the rain and the dew are formed, and hence we have the very frequent expressions, "the dew of heaven," Gen. xxvii. 28; and "the rain of heaven," Deut. xi. 11. The root of the word, although not now existing in Hebrew, is still found in the Arabic (*shamaā*) to be *high*, the word therefore, denotes a *height*. The Hebrew word has the *dual form*, which probably may indicate its twofold meaning, namely, *our atmosphere*, and *the solar system*.

9. "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear : and it was so."

The earth, which, up to this time, had been covered by a vast mass of water, was now to be rendered fit to receive its inhabitants, and this formed part of the third day's creative work. What means the Creator employed in reclaiming a large portion of our globe the sacred writer does not inform us, he merely gives the bare results, without entering upon a description how the result was achieved. The language itself, how-

ever, implies that like all the other acts of creation it was affected by the mere will of God. Hence the Psalmist, in referring to this mighty work of God, says:

6. "Thou hast covered it," (i. e. the earth), "with the flood as with a garment.
Above the mountains stood the waters :
7. "At Thy rebuke they fled ;
At the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away—
8. "'They go up by the mountains, they go down by the valleys—
Unto the place Thou hast appointed for them."
9. "A bound Thou hast set them which they may not pass over,
They may not return again to cover the earth. (Ps. civ. 6-9.)

The sacred writer, in his narrative, says, that the waters were "gathered into one place," and is it not so? The Atlantic, the Pacific, the Indian, and other oceans constitute in fact but one body of water, although parts of it are designated by different names. Now how could Moses have known this, unless he had received this knowledge by inspiration. What was there known of navigation in his time? The early Egyptians, although they apparently made use of some kinds of ships, yet their commerce on the water seems not to have been extensive, nor have we any account of them having ventured to any distance on the seas.

10. "And God called the dry land *Earth* ; and the gathering of the waters He called *Seas* : and God saw that it was good.

Here again we have to lament our inability in not being able to trace the etymological reason why "the dry land"

* Luther, in his German version, and some of the modern commentators, and among them Ewald and De Wette, have rendered verse 8 thus :

"Mountains rise up, and valleys sink down—
Unto the place Thou hast appointed them."

This rendering certainly affords a beautiful *panoramic view* such as would have presented itself to an eye-witness gazing at the receding waters, seeing the mountains gradually rising out of the deep, and the depressions of the valleys by degrees becoming more and more distinctly defined. And it is but right to add, that the original perfectly admits of this rendering. Still, in my opinion, the rendering above given, and which is also that of the English version and of the German authorized Jewish version, by Rabbi Solomon Hakkohen, which makes the waters the subject of the whole passage, is much more natural, and accords better with the context. The sixth verse refers to Gen. i. 1, when the waters covered the earth as with a garment. The seventh and eighth verses depict how the waters fled to their appointed places at the will of God. And the ninth verse declares that God set a limit to these waters which they may not pass over, and submerge the earth again in water. Thus the waters form the subject to all the verbs in the passage. But if we make the "mountains" and "valleys" the subjects of the verbs in verse 8, then we must supply after, "a bound thou hast set," in verse 9, *to the waters*, otherwise, "mountains" and "valleys" would form also the subject of the verbs in verse 9 as being the last mentioned, and which certainly would make no sense.

was called *אֶרֶץ* (*erets*) "earth" as the root of the word does not now exist in Hebrew or its cognate languages, though no doubt such a root was once in use. The Hebrew term *יָמִים* (*yammim*) "seas" includes all collections of water, whether oceans, lakes, or rivers. In the singular the noun is sometimes applied to a large river, as Is. xix. 5, the Nile, Jer. li. 36, the Euphrates, and the plural noun even to branches of rivers as Ezek. xxxii. 2. The Nile and Euphrates being in Scripture sometimes spoken of under the term of *sea*, may be accounted for from their periodical overflowing and thus assuming the appearance of a *large expanse of water*. So the Egyptians from the most ancient times have called and still call the Nile (*el Bahr*) *the sea*. The *sea* is, in Hebrew, termed *יָם* (*yam*), from its *tumultuous motion* by winds or *tides*. Hence the prophets compare the wicked to a troubled sea, (Is. lvii. 20,) or to a large body of people in a restless state of commotion, (Jer. li. 42.)

11. "And God said, *Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.*

The earth having now been divested of its watery cover, and rendered fit again for the reception of its inhabitants, was not allowed to remain long an empty waste but the same day was adorned with all the various species of plants and trees such as do now exist.

"All vegetations complicated scheme,
Was formed from nothing, like a dream."

Moses here aptly divides the whole vegetable kingdom into *three main classes*; namely *אֶשְׂכָּל* (*deshe*) *grass*, which some of the most eminent Jewish commentators understood to embrace those grasses which grow spontaneously without the care of man. The term probably includes all such plants which are propagated rather by the division of their roots than by seeds; and hence the plants denoted by the term, it will be seen, are not like those of the other two classes represented as bearing seed. Hence, too, this term is generally employed in speaking of vegetation that clothes the field, as Ps. xxiii. 2, "He maketh me to lie down in pastures *אֶשְׂכָּל* (*deshe*) of grass." (English version, "in green pastures"). So 2 Sam. xxiii. 4, "as the grass *springing* out of the earth from the shining of the sun after rain."

The second division called *עֵשֶׂב* (*esev*) *herbs*, embraces all kinds of seed, bearing plants, whether wild or cultivated; in fact all plants between grasses and trees, serviceable as food both for man and beast.

The third division **עץ** (*ets*) *trees*, embraces all hard-wooded plants, in contradistinction to *herbage*, which have a softer texture. The noun is derived from the verb **עצק** (*atsukh*) to *make firm*, or to *shut in*; probably so called from the bark forming a covering to the tree. The German naturalist, Hiero. Bock or Bouc, but more generally called Tragus, who flourished in the sixteenth century, also divided plants into *three classes*. The Rev. Mr. Goodwin, in his *Essay* (which forms one of the "Essays and Reviews") pp. 247, 248, objects to this part of the Mosaic account, on the ground "that nothing is said of herbs and trees which are not serviceable as food for man and animals." This is a very frivolous objection, hardly to be expected from such a learned man. The three terms mentioned in the text, include all, since every plant or tree is of some use either to man or to animals, otherwise they would not have been created. Hence when they are appointed for food for man and beast, in verses 29, 30, it means they are appointed for general use, whether for the purpose of *food* or *medicine*, or any other purpose. What may be looked upon in one part of the world as useless or even troublesome, would be looked upon in another part as useful and even a blessing. A striking example we have in the *wild portulacca*, which with us is such a troublesome weed in our gardens, especially those having a sandy soil; in Arabia and other eastern countries it is extensively used by the common people as a salad, although, from its insipidness, it is called by them "*the silly weed*."

14. "And God said, *Let there be luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to divide between the day and between the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.*"

"Let there be luminaries," that is, let the luminaries now shine forth in their full splendour, and continue to do so. It will be seen there is here no mention made of the luminaries being created, but like the *matter light* in verse 3, they are merely called upon to *appear*. The dense mass of clouds and vapours which up to now had still surrounded the earth and intercepted the rays of the sun, at the mandate of God now cleared away, and as the atmosphere became pure and serene, the sun shone forth in his full power and splendour.

In verse 3 the sacred writer employed the word **אור** (*or*), which denotes the *element light*, but here he employed the word, **מאורות** (*me'oroth*) which means *luminaries* or *light dispensers*, in fact lamps upon a gigantic scale, having no lights of their own, but being merely dispensers of it. The luminaries were from henceforth again "to divide between day and night," in order that the distinction between day and night may be again

distinctly marked. "And they shall be for signs." The Hebrew word *othoth* (*othoth*) denotes also *marks* by which anything is known. These luminaries were to serve as marks or signs to form epochs of general reckoning, for indicating the different quarters of heaven, to aid the mariner in navigation, and to guide the husbandman in his various pursuits. They were further also to serve as signs portending extraordinary events or miraculous manifestations. Thus it is said :

"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth,
Blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke,
The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,*
Before the day of the LORD come,
The great and the terrible."

Joel iii. 3, 4; Eng. Vers. ch. ii. 30, 31.

"And for appointed times;" the luminaries were also to mark the seasons of the year, and the various festivals and religious solemnities which were afterwards to be appointed. They were further to mark the seasons which influence the animals and birds, &c. Hence the prophet Jeremiah says :

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times;
And the turtle-dove and crane and swallow observe the time of their coming."
Jer. viii. 7.

"And for days and years," it is, as signs for marking the division of days and years.

15. "*And let them be for luminaries in the heavens to give light upon the earth; and it was so.*"

This most important office of the luminaries, although already included in the preceding verse, is here especially mentioned, in order to mark the climax of the importance and utility of these luminaries.

16. "*And God constituted (or ordained) the two great luminaries; the greater luminary for the ruling of the day, and the lesser luminary for the ruling of the night: and He appointed the stars also.*"

It is the rendering of the Hebrew verb *wayyaas* (*wayyaas*), by "and he made" in the English version, instead of "and he constituted or ordained," which has chiefly led to the supposition that these luminaries were actually created on the fourth day. Now, this is not exactly a mistranslation, but rather an unfortunate selection from the various meanings which the verb has. Had the sacred writer intended to convey the idea that

* It is into the colour of blood. The intense brightness of the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the paleness of the moon into deep red.

these luminaries were created on the fourth day, he would undoubtedly have employed the verb בָּרָא (*baru*), *he created*, which is used in verse 1, and again in verse 21, "And God created the great sea monsters." The primary meaning of the verb עָשָׂה (*asah*) no doubt is, *to make, to work*, yet it is over and over again used also in the sense *to constitute, to appoint* just as we often use the verb *to make* in the sense *to appoint or constitute*. As, for example, 1 Sam. xii. 6, "It is the Lord who עָשָׂה (*asah*) appointed Moses and Aaron." (Eng. vers., "advanced Moses and Aaron.") Again, 1 Kings xii. 31, "And he made an house of high places וַיַּעַשׂ (*wai-yaas*), and appointed priests of the lowest of the people." (Eng. vers., "and made priests." And so in many other places.

The sun and moon are not in the passage before us called "the greater" and "the lesser," from an astronomical point of view, but in reference as to their appearance to the inhabitants of the earth, since Moses, throughout his narrative, aims to describe things just as they would have appeared to any one had he been present. The fact that many stars far surpass in magnitude both the sun and moon, is, therefore, not in the least affected by the above declaration. As the designations "greater" and "lesser" unmistakably point to the sun and moon, their names are here omitted. The sun is, however, in Hebrew called שֶׁמֶשׁ (*shemesh*) i. e., *one that ministers*, so called from its ministering light and heat to the earth, whilst the moon is called יָרֵחַ (*yarēach*) i. e., *the pale orb*, from its paleness, and sometimes in poetry לְבָנָה (*levanah*) i. e., *the white orb*. "For the ruling," it is, to regulate day and night by their rising and setting. "And the stars," it is, God ordained the stars also to perform their various offices. It will be seen, the phrase "and the stars" is very abruptly introduced, as if it were by *parenthesis*: the words *ordained also* do not occur in the original. The abruptness of the expression may probably be accounted for by the stars being merely regarded as companions of the moon, to replace in some measure the absence of the light of the moon when that luminary is not visible. Under the term כּוֹכָבִים (*cochavim*) i. e., *stars*, the Hebrews comprehended all the *celestial orbs*, except the sun and moon; hence the Psalmist says:

"Praise ye Him sun and moon :
Praise Him all ye stars of light."
(Ps. cxlviii. 3.)

17. "So God constituted them in the expanse of heaven to give light upon the earth."

This verse being a mere continuation of the preceding, the *conjunctive* is here again better rendered by *so*. As regards

the Hebrew verb נתן (*nathan*) here employed, which, in the English version, is rendered by "set": "And God set them in the firmament of heaven," I have already shown in the introduction, p. liii., in reference to the rainbow, that this verb, in common with most Hebrew verbs, has several shades of signification, namely, *to give, to set, to constitute, to appoint, to make, &c.*, and there can therefore, not be the least objection to render it "constituted," as I have done above. Numerous passages may be adduced, where this verb is used in the sense *to constitute, to appoint*. Thus, in Genesis xvii. 5: "For a father of many nations I have constituted thee." English version, (I have made thee). So again Exodus vii. 1, "See, I have appointed thee a *god to Pharaoh." (English version, "I have made thee.") Hugh Miller, seeing the impossibility of plants created on the third day, passing through a long period of darkness, as they necessarily must have done, according to the theory that the six days of creation are six indefinite periods of time, had to acknowledge in order to get over the difficulty, that the sun, moon, and stars, may have been created long before, though it was not until the fourth day of creation, that they became visible from the earth's surface. (Test. page 134.)

But that the stellar system existed even before the foundation of our globe, the Scriptures themselves afford evidence. Among the numerous questions which God showered down upon Job, illustrative of His omnipotence in the formation and disposition of the works of creation, are the following ones:

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth?
 Declare, if thou hast understanding,
 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?
 Or who hath stretched out the line upon it?
 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?
 Or who laid the corner-stone thereof?
 When the morning stars sang together,
 And all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

(Job xxxviii., 4-7).

This passage clearly proves that the stellar system was not created on the fourth day of the Mosaic account of the

* The somewhat peculiar expression: "I made (or appointed) thee a god to Pharaoh," has proved not a little perplexing to the commentators. Onkelos, in his Chaldee version, renders it "a master to Pharaoh." Pseudo Jonathan, in his Chaldee version, translates "formidable as if thou wert his God." The celebrated commentator, Eben Ezra, rendered "an Angel to Pharaoh," by which he of course means an authorized messenger of God. Rashi, a very favourite Hebrew commentator, paraphrased the passage, "a superior and master, authorized to punish him with plagues and afflictions."

The passage evidently belongs to that class of construction termed *constructio pregnans*, that is, where the language employed implies more than is actually

creation, but that they already existed when God laid the foundation of the earth. There is no getting over this passage, the language is too plain, and it must be remembered also, that the words are not the words of Job or of his three friends, but of God Himself.

It may, perhaps, be argued, that in the fourth commandment it is distinctly stated, that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." (Exod. xx. 11). Precisely so *עָשָׂה* (*asa*) *ordered or fashioned*, but it does not say *בָּרָא* (*bara*) *created*, as it does in Gen. i. 1, which latter verb would no doubt have been employed by the sacred writer if the primary creation of the universe were referred to. As the fourth commandment depends on Genesis i., hence it must be explained by that chapter, for there is evidently only so much of the creative work referred to in the commandment as relates directly to the institution of the Sabbath, namely, *in six days God perfected his creative work*, as related in chapter i. from verse three to the end of the chapter, "and rested on the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." Dr. Davis justly remarks, "It is a violation of an essential rule of sound interpretation to infer the meaning of an author from a condensed sentence, introduced incidentally, instead of deriving it from his more direct, connected, and ample statements on the same subject." (Pre-Adamite Earth, p. 278). As an example of the truth of the foregoing remark we may instance the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." Now, it would surely not be sound interpretation to infer that because this commandment is worded in the same manner as the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," therefore the murderer ought not to be more severely punished than he who steals? The sixth commandment is a condensed sentence of Gen. ix., 5, 6, by which it must be interpreted.

I hope enough has been said to show that there is nothing in the Mosiac account to warrant the supposition that the planetary system was actually created on the fourth day, but that on the contrary, everything tends to prove that the luminaries had their existence before the Mosiac account of the creation commences.

expressed, namely, "I have constituted thee an authorized ambassador of God to Pharaoh; and Aaron, thy brother, shall be thy prophet," (i.e., spokesman). The etymological meaning of *נָבִיא* (*navi*) is a *spokesman*, from *נָבָא* or *נָבַע* (*nava*), to *pour out words*. Hence one who utters what God has disclosed to him, thus a *prophet*. This precisely agrees with what we read: ch. iv. 16, "And he shall speak for thee to the people, and he shall indeed be to thee instead of a mouth," (i.e., spokesman,) "and thou shalt be to him instead of God." It is, he shall receive all Divine communications through thee.

20. *And God said, Let the waters swarm with moving creatures, with living beings, and fowl shall fly above the earth, upon the face of the expanse of heaven, i. e., in the open firmament of heaven.*

The replenishing of the waters and the air with their respective inhabitants constituted the creative work of the fourth day. The Hebrew verb שָׂרַץ (*sharats*) denotes to multiply abundantly, to swarm, and is applied to all kinds of living creatures whether inhabiting the waters or dry land, which are remarkable for their rapid increase. It is only in a few instances used by the sacred writer in reference to the increase of the human species, as for example, Gen. ix. 7, when God blessed Noah and his sons. Also, Exod. i. 7, where it is most appropriately used in reference to the extraordinary increase of the children of Israel in Egypt. The term שָׂרָץ (*sherets*) moving creatures, or creeping creatures, which is derived from the foregoing verb, therefore, is generally used in reference to those creatures which are remarkable for their fecundity, such as is pre-eminently the case with the finny tribes, and such creatures as are accustomed to move about in swarms. Here the sacred writer adds another term נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה (*nepheesh chayyah*) living beings, a term far more comprehensive in its meaning, and including all kinds of water animals, small and large, and likewise reptiles.

The rendering in the English version, "Let the waters bring forth," rather leads to the supposition that "the waters" were made the agent in the production of their inhabitants. Such, however, will be seen from the literal rendering, is not the case; they were called into existence by the mere fiat of God. And God said, "Let the waters swarm with moving creatures."

According to the pointing in the English version, and the insertion of the word *that*, it makes it appear as if the fowl were brought forth from the water also. It reads, "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth." This is at variance with what is said in ch. ii. 19: "And the LORD God formed from the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heavens." The apparent discrepancy which the rendering of the English version gives rise to, has not escaped the notice of some English adverse critics. The Rev. C. W. Goodwin, M. A., in his essay on the Mosaic Cosmogony, draws attention to it. He remarks: "On the fifth day the waters are called into productive activity, and bring forth fishes and marine animals, as also the birds of the air." And in a note on the bottom of the page he says: "In the second narrative of creation, in which no distinction is made, the

birds are said to have been formed out of the ground. Gen. ii. 19." (Essays and Reviews, p. 248.)

The Rev. Mr. Goodwin evidently did not consult the original—it is to be supposed that he at least had some knowledge of Hebrew, or he would not have presumed to criticize the Mosaic account in the way he has done—or he would have at once perceived that the discrepancy altogether arose from not having closely enough adhered to the Hebrew text. On referring to the Hebrew Bible it will be seen that the word *חַיָּה* (*chaiyah*), "living," has the pause accent *athrach*, which is equal to our colon, and the word *that* is not in the original. Let, now, the reader turn back to my rendering of the verse, and he will find that *the fowls were not brought forth by the waters*, but merely commanded *to fly above the earth*. The sacred writer here merely alludes to the creation of the fowl and the element assigned to them in which they were to move, without stating how they were created; which information is given in ch. ii. 19. The same is precisely the case with the creation of man, which, in ch. i. 26, 27, is merely spoken of as having taken place. A fuller account is recorded in ch. ii. 7.

21. *And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moveth, with which the waters swarm, after their kind, and every winged fowl after its kind: and God saw that it was good.*

This verse gives merely a recapitulation of what is stated in the preceding verse, just as verses 17 and 18 form a recapitulation of verses 14, 15, 16. The rendering, "great whales," given in the English version, is too restricted; the Hebrew term *תַּנִּינִים* (*tanninim*) literally means *large stretched out animals*, hence all kinds of *sea monsters*. In later times, the term was even applied to large land animals, and in some instances the desert is assigned as their place of habitation. In some passages the word is rendered in the English version by "dragon." Moses, evidently used the word here in the sense of sea monsters, and mentions them particularly to show that they were included in the term *שָׂרָץ* (*sherets*) "moving creatures" employed in the preceding verse. I may here remark that the sacred writers in general have frequently to labour under great difficulties in expressing certain objects, owing to the paucity of specific names in the Hebrew language. In such cases they select such terms as they consider would best convey their ideas, and not unfrequently, they are guided in their use of words by the derivation. It is, therefore, highly necessary for the student of the Bible to pay particular attention in doubtful cases both to *derivation* and *context*.

From what has been said above, we may sum up the work

of the fifth day's creation to have comprehended all inhabitants of the waters, the fowl of the air, including winged insects.

24. And God said, *Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and reptiles, and beasts of the earth after their kind: and it was so.*

As the waters were made to teem with living creatures, and the air filled with winged birds and insects on the fifth day, it remained now only to furnish the land with its inhabitants to complete the work of creation. Hence, on the sixth day, at the fiat of Jehovah, the earth brought forth all kinds of living land animals by which, however, must not be understood that any creative power was delegated to the earth, no more than when it is said, verse 20, "Let the waters swarm with moving creatures," &c., the language in both cases simply implies that the creatures were to begin to exist. Hence the sacred writer adds, verse 25, "And God made the beasts of the earth," &c., to show that God created them.

To be more precise, Moses specifies these under three classes, namely, *בהמה* (*behemah*), a term which is generally applied to *domestic animals*, though in later times its meaning became gradually extended so as sometimes to include also all *grass-eating* quadrupeds, whether tame or wild. The second class is called *רמש* (*remes*), which includes the smaller land animals which move either without feet or with feet which are so small that they are scarcely perceptible; *insects, reptiles, worms*. The *moving things* spoken of, in verse 21, as being created on the fifth day, are inhabitants of the water, and hence it is distinctly stated, "which the waters brought forth abundantly," whilst the *moving things* created on the sixth day are in verse 26 particularly specified as "moving things that move upon the earth," the sacred writer was particularly careful that the two should not be confounded with one another. The third class is denoted by the term *חיתו ארץ* (*chayetho erets*) literally *beasts of the earth*, that is, such as roam freely about upon the face of the earth, which we generally call *wild beasts*.

I may mention here that the term *חיה* (*chayah*) only means a *living animal* according to its derivation, although this term, no doubt, is generally applied to wild beasts in contradistinction to *בהמה* (*behemah*) domestic animals. Hence we find that term sometimes qualified as *חיה רעה* (*chayah raah*) "an evil beast," (Gen. xxxvii. 33) or *חית קנה* (*chayath *kaneh*) "a beast of the reeds," it is, such a one as lurks in the reeds, as the *crocodile*. (Ps. lxxviii. 31.) But the Hebrew word does

* *קנה* (*kaneh*); Greek, *καρυς*; Latin, *canna*; English, *cane*.

not actually imply any voracity in the nature of these animals, and it is, therefore, very probable that at the time of their creation, and before the fall of man, although these animals, no doubt, were endowed with different natures, some being more or less adapted to be brought under the control of man, still, I say, there is nothing in the signification of the Hebrew word which would imply that they were at that time as fierce and ravenous as they are at present. Indeed, the fact that even the most ravenous of the wild beasts may be tamed at least to some extent, if not altogether, strongly argues in favour of their not having possessed that fierceness from the beginning. Hence, Isaiah, in his vivid prophetic declaration, ch. xi., 6-9, speaks of the happy time that shall be ushered in when sin shall have ceased again from man, and the peaceful kingdom of the branch that cometh out of the root of Jesse shall have been established as one of universal peace and amity between beasts and beasts, and beasts and man, implying, as it were, that the same amity shall again reign as existed before sin entered the world.

We come now to the crowning act of the creation, namely, the creation of *man*. The *Fourth period* was to be preëminently distinguished from the three previous geological periods by the addition of the human family among the newly created inhabitants of the earth. It is an admitted fact, that there never has been found a single fossil remain belonging to a *human being*, not even in the newest Tertiary beds, except those nearest to our present surface. This conclusively proves that the human species never existed before the Scriptural account of creation.*

* It is proper to mention here one recorded case of human skeletons imbedded in a solid limestone rock, discovered on the shore of Guadeloupe. One of these skeletons is preserved in the British Museum. These fossil remains are some times alluded to, and much stress laid upon them as if they were of great antiquity, whilst, in reality they are comparatively of only recent formation. According to General Ernout: "The rock, in which the human bones occur, is composed of consolidated sand, and contains also, shells of species now inhabiting the adjacent sea and land, together with fragments of pottery, arrows, and hatchets of stone. The greater number of bones are dispersed. One entire skeleton was extended in the usual position of burial; another, which was in softer sandstone, seems to have been buried in a sitting position, customary among the Caribs. The bodies thus differently interred, may have belonged to two different tribes." General Ernout also explains "the occurrence of different scattered bones, by reference to a tradition of a battle and massacre on this spot of a tribe of Gallibis by the Caribs, about the year 1779, A. D. These scattered bones of the Gallibis were probably covered by the action of the sea with sand, which soon afterwards became converted into solid rock." It is, however, admitted by all geologists, that the rock in which these skeletons occur is of very recent formation. "Such kind of stones," says Mr. Buckland, "are frequently formed in a few years from sand banks composed of similar materials on the shores of tropical seas." (See *Lin. Transactions*, 1818. Vol. xii., p. 53. Also Buckland's *Geology and Mineralogy*, Vol. i. pp. 104, 105.)

Sir Charles Lyell, in his celebrated work, "Principles of Geology," says: "But in none of these formations, whether secondary, tertiary, or alluvial, have the remains of man, or any of his works, been discovered, and whoever dwells upon this subject must be convinced that the present order of things, and the comparatively recent existence of man as master of the globe is as certain as the destruction of a former and a different order, and the extinction of a number of living forms which have no type in being." (Vol. i. p. 147.)

Professor Silliman, of Yale College, New Haven, Conn., in his introduction to the American edition of Martell's "Wonders of Geology," remarks: "It may, however, serve to engage the attention of those to whom geology is a *terra incognita*, if we, in this place remark that no field of science presents more gratifying, astonishing, and (but for the evidence) incredible results. It strikes us that man has been but a few thousand years a tenant of this world; for, nothing which we discover in the structure of the earth, would lead us to infer that he existed at a point more remote than that assigned to him by the Scriptures. Had he been contemporary with the animals and plants of the early geological periods we should have found his remains, and his works entombed along with them." (Eng. edit., vol. i. p. 16.)

There are, indeed, a few writers who, in their anxiety to impugn the veracity of the Mosaic account of the creation, appealed to Kent's Cavern of Torquay, as affording proof that man must have existed at a much more remote period than that which is assigned to him in Scripture. It appears that in that cavern some human bones and flint of human workmanship were found, together with the bones of extinct cavern animals, beneath a bed of *stalagmite* deposits, which it is alleged must have occupied a far greater period in forming than 6000 years. Indeed, they pretend to calculate the time to such a nicety as if they had been sitting there all the time with a chronometer in their hands. Not having seen the famous cavern myself, I am not in a position to express an opinion on the subject, but I will appeal to authorities whose statements will, I am sure, not for a moment be questioned. Milner, in his work, entitled "The Gallery of Nature," (p. 252,) gives the following account: "Kent's Cavern in the limestone of North Devon, about a mile from Torquay. It is said to be nearly six hundred feet long, varying in width from two to seventy feet, and in height from one to six yards. The bones of extinct animals are found to be buried in a mass of mud, covered over with a crust of *stalagmatic* formation. From certain appearances in this cavern, it seems to have been in former times the habitation of man, perhaps the bandits' home."

Martell, a well known and esteemed writer, in speaking of Kent's Cave, near Torquay, remarks in his beautiful work, "Wonders of Geology," (vol. i., p. 182): "But this cave is invested with additional interest on another account which we will briefly explain. The principal fissure extends 600 feet in length, and there are several lesser lateral ones. The lower part of the cave is filled up to a thickness of 20 feet, with reddish sandy loam full of fossil bones. This is covered by a layer of stalagmite from one to four feet thick, which forms the floor of the cave. Upon this is a slight covering of earthy matter, with here and there patches of charcoal, a few human bones, and fragments of coarse ancient pottery have been observed. Upon breaking through the sparry floor the ossiferous earth is exposed, and imbedded with the fossil bones, several flint knives with arrow and spear heads of flint, have been discovered. These stone instruments are of the same kind as those found in the tumuli of the early British tribes, and unquestionably belong to the same period. This fact has given rise to much curious speculation; but the arguments which I shall presently bring forward, when speaking of a similar collection of works of art and human bones with those of extinct cavern animals will, I conceive, show that the data hitherto obtained, do not warrant the inference that these relics were contemporary." And a little further on Martell remarks: "When Kent's Cave was accessible, and before the formation of the floor of stalagmite, some of the wandering tribes of the early Britons may have crawled into the recess, or occasionally sought shelter; and stone implements, bones, or any other hard substance left in the cave, would soon sink a few feet in the soft ossiferous mud and become hermetically sealed up, as it were, by the stalagmite deposits."

Buckland, in his "Geology and Mineralogy, published among the Bridgewater treatises (vol. vi. p. 104,) remarks: "The occasional discovery of human bones and works of art in any stratum within a few feet of a surface, affords no certain evidence of such remains being co-eval with the matrix in which they are deposited. The universal practice of interring the dead, and frequent custom of placing various instruments and utensils in the ground with them, offer a ready explanation of the presence of bones of men in situations accessible for the purpose of burial." And, at p. 105, he observes: "Frequent discoveries have also been made of human bones, and rude works of art, in natural caverns, sometimes inclosed in stalactite, at other times in beds of earthy materials, which are interspersed with bones of extinct species of quadrupeds. These cases may, likewise, be explained by the common practice of mankind in all ages, to bury their dead in such

convenient repositories. The accidental circumstances, that many caverns contained the bones of extinct species of other animals dispersed through the same soil in which human bodies may have been buried, affords no proof of the time when these remains of men were introduced." Buckland then goes on to say: "Many of these caverns have been inhabited by savage tribes, who, for convenience of occupation, have repeatedly disturbed portions of soil, in which their predecessors may have been buried. Such disturbance will explain the occasional admixture of fragments of human skeletons, and the bones of modern quadrupeds with those of extinct species, introduced at more early periods, and by natural causes."

There are, too, not a few cases on record, where fossil bones of animals have been mistaken for human bones. Thus Schemhzer, a physician, in the year 1726, described a schistus rock from Peringen on the Rhine as containing an impression of a man, and actually wrote a dissertation upon the subject entitled *Homo Diluvii testis*. In another work of his he maintains, "that it is indubitable, and that it contains a moiety, or nearly so, of the skeleton of a man: that the substance even of the bones, nay more, of the flesh, are there incorporated in the stone: in fact, that it is one of the rarest relics which we possess of that cursed race which were overwhelmed by the waters of the Noachian flood." Now, it was rather cruel for Cuvier to deprive this ancient relic of its interest by declaring it to be nothing more than "a great salamandar." The femur of the bear has sometimes been mistaken for the human thigh-bone, to which it seems to bear a great resemblance. Any number of eminent writers might be quoted, who distinctly held that no traces of the human species, or of his works have yet been found in the strata of the earth, or as some express it, "below drift."

It may probably be convenient for naturalists to class man with the animal kingdom; it is, however, plain the sacred writer has regarded him as a far loftier being. Man, as far as the structure of his body is concerned in many respects, no doubt, bears a strong resemblance to the animal; yet, on the other hand, he possesses so many distinct characteristics which, I think, fairly entitle him to a higher position. Even heathen writers have not overlooked this important fact. "Many things are mighty, but nothing is mightier than man," says the great tragic poet Sophocles. And Ovid, one of the finest poets of the Augustan age, beautifully and graphically describes the superiority of man in the following manner:

"A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was man designed:
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire formed, and fit to rule the rest:

Thus, while the whole creation downward bend
 Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,
 Man looks aloft, and, with erected eyes,
 Beholds his own hereditary skies."

(Dryden's Ovid, Met. I., 67, 77, 84-86.)

Aristotle also excluded man from the domain of the animal kingdom, and his example has been followed by a host of modern writers, who have more or less strongly protested against "his introduction into an arrangement of the brute mammalia." Man possesses such great and peculiar distinctive characteristics which will ever defy any attempt to trace his origin from the lower creation. Naturalists are accustomed to appeal to resemblances, but take care not to touch upon the real distinctive characteristics, such as intellectual and moral endowments and the use of speech. Mr. Swainson has very justly observed, "Now, the very first law by which to be guided in arrangement is this, that the object is to be designated and classified by that property or quality which is its most distinctive or peculiar characteristic. This law, indeed, is well understood, and has only been violated by systematists when they designate man an animal. Instead of classing him according to his highest and most distinguishing property—Reason—they have selected his very lowest qualities whereby to decide upon the station he holds in the scale of creation." (Swainson on the Natural History and Class of Quadrupeds, pp. 8-10.

The sacred writer introduces the creation of man by representing God as taking counsel with Himself.

26. *And God said, Let Us make אָדָם (Adam) man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

"Let us make man," Moses could not possibly have set forth more forcibly the importance of the creation of man, than by representing the Almighty after having by His mere fiat called all things into existence, now first takes counsel with Himself before He enters upon the act of the creation of man, for the very idea of taking counsel in itself presupposes importance, and it is undoubtedly the importance of the event that the inspired writer wishes to convey by the statement. "And let them have dominion." It was not to Adam alone that the power of subduing the animals was given, but to his descendants likewise. But whilst man was invested with such great power, it surely does not imply that he at any time is permitted to misuse that power and unnecessarily inflict torture. Animals, it should be borne in mind, are endowed with the sense of

feeling as well as human beings, and, hence, to cause pain unnecessarily to any of God's creatures is no less reprehensible than to torture a human being. It is upon the principle of causing as little pain in killing animals for domestic use, that some of the rules in the Mishna (Treatise Cholin) are founded. Whether these humane laws of the Mishna exercise any influence upon the Jewish mind in general, I cannot say, but certain it is, the torturing of animals among the Jewish people is of very rare occurrence either among the young or old.

Although many animals greatly surpass man in courage, in size and strength, yet by the possession of *reason*, with which the Almighty has endowed him, all created beings are brought under his rule.

27. "And God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him; a male and a female created He them."

This verse presents to us the momentous question, namely, in what respect can man be said to bear the image of God? Surely not in respect to his body, for that, according to Genesis ii., 7, was formed "of the dust of the ground;" and in this respect man can claim no superiority over the beasts of the field and the fowl of the air, which, according to verse 19, were similarly formed. In what, then, does this resemblance exist? The answer to this question is afforded in the same verse which informs us of the low origin of our body, for it likewise tells us that God, after having formed man of the dust of the ground, He "breathed into his nostrils (נשמת חיים *nish-math chai-yim*) the spirit of life." It is by this act of God's breathing in the nostrils of Adam "the spirit of life," that man became the image and likeness of God. The reader will please to notice, too, that man did not become "a living creature" by God merely breathing upon him, but he having "the spirit of life" breathed "into his nostrils." Hence Daniel speaks of his body as *the sheath of his spirit*: "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my (נדרה *nidneh*) sheath," (Eng. vers. "body"; but in the margin the literal rendering "sheath" is given). Hence, too, St. Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. iii., 16.) The body is the temple, the spirit is the dweller.

It is related of an ancient philosopher, who was slighted by Alexander the Great, on account of his ugly face, to have answered the monarch, "The body of a man is nothing but the scabbard of a sword, in which the soul is put up." (See the Herbelot, Biblioth. Orientale, p. 842).

The following beautiful stanzas on the soul, are taken from

the "Critica Biblica," the author's name is not given. (Vol. ii., p. 263).

"Hail ! everlasting spirit—breath divine
Of the Almighty—Heaven's bright offspring, hail !
When sun, and moon, and stars shall cease to shine,
And earth, and air, and ocean's waters fail,
Thou still shalt be—immortal figure thine,
Their history shall be unto thee a tale
Of times so distant, ages so long past,
Thou would'st forget them, could thy knowledge waste.

Hail ! thou bright effluence of the Eternal Mind !
Made in his image, form'd for his delight ;
Ordain'd to triumph in the unconfined,
And blissful presence of the infinite—
Yea, thou shalt live, shalt really live, and find,
Age, sickness, sorrow, pain, death, vanish'd quite—
Unless thou now thy proffer'd good refusest,
And earthly pleasure for thy portion choosest.

Man having become the image and likeness of God, hence it is, that the crime of murder was by Divine commandment to be punished with death : " Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed ; for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. ix. 2.) For he that taketh man's life effaces by that act the image of God. It is for this reason, also, that the Psalmist says : " And yet thou hast made him," (*i.e.*, man), a little lower than the angels." (Ps. viii. 6 ; Eng. v. 5.) Ziegler, an eminent German writer, has also very pertinently remarked on this passage : " The breath of God became the soul of man ; and the soul of man, therefore, is nothing but the breath of God. The rest of the world exists through the word of God ; man through his peculiar breath." Hence, Solomon also said that " the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. xii. 7.)

Some of the Greek and Roman writers seem to have become forcibly impressed with this Bible doctrine, and many of their expressions regarding the nature of man even bear a strong similarity to those employed in Scripture. Lucretius says : " The earth is properly called our mother ; that which comes from the earth, returns again into the earth ; and that which was sent down from the regions of the sky, the regions of the sky again receives when carried back to them." (ii. 997-1000.) Euripides observes : " The body returns to the earth from whence it was formed, and the spirit ascends to the ether." (Suppl. 532-534.)

The ancient Egyptians too, considered the soul to be essentially distinct from the body, and only connected with it through the link of life. Its nature was divine, and after death it passed to the great judgment hall where its future destiny is

determined by Osiris. The soul is sometimes represented in hieroglyphical writings as a *casket of fire*, the casket symbolizing *the body*, and *the fire the spirit*.

As the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has within some few years past been especially attracting a great deal of attention, and the lecture room, the pulpit, as well as the pen, have been made the vehicles for promulgating some very erroneous ideas concerning it, even by persons who should think themselves greatly insulted to be classed among those belonging to the rationalistic school, it may perhaps not be unacceptable to my readers if I enter here somewhat more fully upon the description of this highly important subject.

The Sadducees, who rejected the vital doctrine of the immortality of the soul, held by the Jewish Church, as a consequence denied also the *existence* after death. In modern times the views of the Sadducees have been somewhat modified, so as not to appear altogether in quite such a repulsive form.

Most of my readers are no doubt aware that of late years a theory has been gaining ground, that man possesses no *immortal spirit*, but that immortality is a gift after death as a reward for a pious life, whilst the wicked, on the contrary, *cease to exist* after death, or in other words, are *wholly annihilated*. It will, I think, be no difficult task to show that this theory is altogether unscriptural.

I have above shown, that man bears the image of God only in as far as he possesses נשמה חיים (*nishmath chai-yim*) "the spirit of life," which the Almighty breathed into his nostrils. The rendering of the English version, "breath of life," does not convey the proper meaning of the original, for the Hebrew word נשמה (*neshamah*), I maintain, denotes according to Scripture usage *God's own spirit*, and not the ordinary *breath*. In order to make this important point clear to the reader, it is necessary to observe, that there are two other words in Hebrew, namely, נפש (*nephesh*) and רוח (*ru-ach*), which are in our authorized version also sometimes rendered by *breath*, so that from that version it would be impossible to know which of the three words is employed in any given passage. But these two words have, in common with other Hebrew words various shades of meanings, and are used in reference to animals, which is not the case with the term נשמה (*neshamah*), which, I hold, is only applied to *God*, and to *man* as possessing a *soul*, which is *the spirit of God*. As this is a very important point, I will adduce a few examples, and ask the reader to pay particular attention to the Hebrew terms. And first, the term נפש (*nephesh*), is applied to all kinds of animals, as Gen. i, 24, "Let the earth bring forth

nepheesh chaiyah living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind." So also chapter ii. 19, and in many other places.

It is also frequently employed to express the *personal pronouns*, as Numbers xxiii. 10: "Let נפש (napshi) *me* die the death of the righteous." So Job xxxii. 2, "against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified נפשו (naphsho) *himself* rather than God."

It is further used sometimes to denote *life*, as Exodus xxi. 23: "And if any mischief follow, thou shalt then give נפש נפש (nepesh tachath nepesh) *life for life*." Nay more, it is even used to denote *the dead, or dead body*, as Lev. xxi. 1: "There shall none be defiled לנפש (lenepesh) *for the dead* among his people." So again, verse 11: "Neither shall he go to any נפשת מת (naphshath meth) *dead body*." The word is, however, unquestionably sometimes used to denote *the spirit or soul*, as for instance, Gen. xxxv. 15: "And it came to pass that when נפשה (napshah) *her soul* was in departing." Again, Ps. xvi. 10: "For thou wilt not leave נפשי (naphshi) *my soul* in hell." So again Ps. cxlvi. 1, "Praise the LORD נפשי (naphshi), *O my soul*."

In like manner the word רוח (ru-ach) has various shades of meaning. Thus, it denotes *the spirit of God*, as Gen. i. 2, "And רוח (ru-ach) *the spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters." Again it is used to denote *the wind*, as Gen. viii. 1, "And God caused רוח (ru-ach) *a wind* to pass over the earth." In Eccles. iii. 19, it is applied to man and beasts: "yea, they have all one רוח (ru-ach) *breath*." And so again, Chro. v. 21. The word נשמה (neshamah) on the contrary, as we have stated, is only applied to God and man. Let us examine a few passages where it occurs. In Deut. xx. 16, we read: "But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt not save alive any נשמה (neshamah) *human being*," i.e., any one that has (neshamah) *the spirit of God* within him. The rendering of the English version, "nothing that breathed," is a free rendering, and might lead to the supposition that it included also the animals, but the following verse distinctly shows that the term (neshamah, only refers to *human beings*: "But thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites," &c In accordance with this command we read Josh. x. 40, that Joshua "left none remaining, but utterly destroyed every (neshamah) *human being*. (English version again, "all that breathed.") See also 1 Kings xv. 29, xxvii. 17.

It will thus be seen that in these passages *human beings* are designated by the very term which is employed in Gen. ii. 7.

as having been breathed into the nostrils of Adam by which he became "a living creature."

But further, Isaiah speaks of man as having this (*neshamah*) spirit with him,

"Cease ye from man whose (*neshamah*) spirit is in his nostrils."—(Is. ii. 22.)

It is, desist from putting your confidence in man whose spirit is in his nostrils which has only been given to him, and may, at any time again be taken from him.

And the book of Psalms closes with the beautiful exhortation :

"Let every (*hanneshamah*) human being praise the LORD."

Eng. version, "Let everything that hath breath."

In Job. xxxiii. 4, the term *neshamah* is spoken of as the spirit of the Almighty that giveth life :

"The spirit of God (*ru-ach el*) hath made me,
And (*nishmath shaddai*) the spirit of the Almighty hath given me life."

Here the reader will observe Job draws the distinction, it is not the (*ru-ach*) that gave him life, but the (*neshamah*) which was breathed into the nostrils of Adam.

Besides the passages above quoted the term נשמה (*neshamah*) occurs only in the following places in the Old Testament, namely: Gen. vii. 22, 2 Sam. xxii. 15, Job iv. 9, xxvi. 4, xxvii. 3, xxxii. 8, xxxiv. 14, xxxvii. 10, Ps. xviii. 16 (Eng. vers. v. 15) Prov. xx. 27, Is. lvii. 16, Dan. v. 23, x. 17.* The reader, on referring to these passages, will find that the term (*neshamah*) in every instance, is either applied to God or man. In Gen. vii. 22, at first sight, it is apparently also extended to the animals; but on a closer examination of the passage, and when taken in connection with the preceding verse, it will be found that such is not the case. The passage, beginning at verse 21, reads: "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; and every man." Then verse 22, goes on to say: "All in whose nostrils was נשמת רוח חיים (*nishmath ru-ach chai-yim*) the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was in the dry land died." The expression, "in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life," evidently is only explanatory of "every man" at the end of verse 21, for the destruction of the animals has already been described in the former part of verse 21. The sacred

*The above quotations are taken from Fürst's "Hebrew Concordance," the most perfect Concordance published.

writer, having stated that all inferior animals had perished, then goes on to say: "and every man: Every one in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life"; and then, in order to give additional force to his declaration, he adds: "of all that was in the dry land died." We may remark, too, that in the original the phrase, "and every man," at the end of verse 21, is separated from what precedes by one of the two greatest disjunctive accents in the language, which shows that the phrase was regarded as forming an independent sentence. In the English version it is punctuated by a *comma*, instead of a *colon* or *semicolon*, which are the proper equivalent to the Hebrew accent.

I have rendered, as the reader will have perceived, the term נשמה (*neshamah*) by *human being*, to show that it refers exclusively to *man*, as the rendering "*living creature*," or *living being* as given in the Lexicons, or "every thing that hath breath," as rendered in the English version, might be taken as including the animals also.

From the foregoing remarks it will be seen that the term נשמה (*neshamah*), according to scriptural usage is a special term for designating *the spirit of God* and *the rational soul of man*, which at once indicates the close affinity of man with his Creator; and it is the possession of this *spirit* which so immeasurable exalts man above all other creatures. Hence the Psalmist exclaimed,

What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou shouldst visit him?
And yet thou hast made him only a little lower than the **angels*;
And hast crowned him with glory and honor.

(Ps. viii. 5, 6, Eng. vers. 4, 5.)

Dr. Tupper seems to have been fully impressed with the force and importance of the words, "and he breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life," when he penned the following graphic and beautiful lines on the immortality of the soul:

"Gird up thy mind to contemplation, trembling habitant of the earth:
Tenant of a hovel for a day, thou art heir of the universe for ever!
For neither the congealing of the grave, nor gulfing waters of the firmament,
Nor expansive airs of Heaven, nor dissipative fires of Gehenna,
Nor rust of rest, nor wear, nor waste, nor loss, nor chance, nor change,
Shall avail to quench or overwhelm the spark of soul within thee!

* It is proper to state here that the word rendered "**angels*" in the above passage, in the original is אלהים (*Elohim*) *Gael*, one of the appellations of the Deity, and is precisely the same which is employed in Gen. i. 26: "And (*Elohim*) God said, let us make man." It is, however, quite evident that the term was sometimes used in the sense of angels, for the Septuagint, Chaldees, and Syriac versions, and also St. Paul in quoting this passage, Heb. ii. 7, have rendered it in that manner. Still many modern critics, and among them Gesenius, Ewald, and De Wette, persist in translating, "thou hast made him a little lower than God."

Thou art an imperishable leaf on the evergreen bay-tree of existence ;
 A word of Wisdom's mouth, that cannot be unspoken ,
 A ray of Love's own light ; a drop in Mercy's sea ;
 A creation, marvellous and fearful, begotten by the fiat of Omnipotence.
 I, that speak in weakness, and ye, that hear in charity,
 Shall not cease to live and feel, though flesh may see corruption ;
 For the prison gates of matter shall be broken, and the shackled soul go free."

Scripture declares this נשמה (*neshamah*) also to be the seat of understanding, "the candle of the LORD" which kindles the intellectual powers of man.

"The spirit (נשמה *neshamah*) of man is the candle of the LORD ;
 Searching all the chambers (i.e., the inmost parts) of the "body.

(Prov. xx. 27.)

"I thought days (i.e., age) would speak ;
 And multitude of years show forth wisdom,
 But it is (רוח *ru-ach*) the spirit in man,
 Ever (נשמת שדי *nishmath shadai*) the breath of the
 Almighty that giveth them understanding."

(Job xxxii. 7-8.)

It is neither from length of days nor multitude of years, that *understanding* is to be expected, it is *the spirit*, which God breathed into the nostrils of man, that gives it.

Although the intellectual powers vary greatly in capacity among individuals and races in the human family, yet they are in no case entirely wanting. Mr. Otway, in speaking of the instincts of animals, in his work on "The Intellectuality of Animals," justly observes: "I find no development whatsoever of the religious principle—not a spark of the expectation of another life." With man we see in the lowest of his species an expansiveness in the intellectual and moral structure, that produces longings for immortality ; and within the most darkened of the human race you can light up the aspirations, the hopes, and fears connected with another world. Compare in this way the lowest of the human family—the Bushmen of South Africa, whom Captain Harris, in a recent work describes as follows:—"They usually reside in holes and crannies in rocks ; they possess neither flocks nor herds ; they are unacquainted with agriculture ; they live almost entirely on bulbous roots, locusts, reptiles, and the larvæ of ants ; their only dress is a piece of leather round their waist, and their speech resembles

* English Version : "Inward parts of the belly," but בטן (*beten*) belly, is sometimes metaphorically used in the sense of body, or that part of the body which the Hebrews regarded as the seat of thought or of affection, namely, the heart, or reins. As, for example, Job xv. 35 :

They conceive in mischief, and bring forth iniquity,
 Their heart (בטנם *bitnam*, lit., their belly) prepared deceit."

rather the chattering of monkeys than the language of human beings. Now there is little or nothing here better than what is found amongst the inferior animals. But, let us take a young Bushman, and put his mind under a right educational process, and we shall soon excite in him what we must ever fail to do in the young monkey, or dog, or elephant. We can communicate to him the expressiveness that belongs to any heir of immortality; within him are the germs of faith, hope, and religious love, which *do not* exist in inferior animals."

"A male and a female created he them." The rendering of the passage in our Authorized Version, "male and female created he them," has been construed by some modern naturalists and physiologists—more especially among those of the United States—as indicating a plurality of created races of men. Of the most eminent of those who espoused this theory, we may mention Professor Agassiz, Dr. Morton, Dr. Nott, Dr. J. C. Warren, Professor Gibson, Dr. Kneeland. All these take the ground that "the received opinion that all human beings are descended from one pair—Adam and Eve—is not supported by the Mosaic record." This positive assertion can only have been grounded on the rendering of the English version, for the original unmistakably teaches quite the opposite, since the terms זָכָר (*sachar*) a male, and נִקְבָּה (*nekevah*) a female, are nouns and not adjectives, and, therefore, should have been rendered as I have done, "a male" and "a female." Had the sacred writer wished to indicate that more than *one pair* had been created, the nouns would not have been used in the singular, but with a plural form. In Gen. vii. 3, these very terms occur again where they are correctly rendered in our version "of the fowl of the air by sevens, זָכָר וְנִקְבָּה (*sachar unekevah*) the male and the female. But even if the terms were adjectives they would still require the plural form, for in Hebrew, contrary to what obtains in the English language, plural adjectives assume, like nouns, a plural form.

In the second chapter, where the creation of Adam and Eve is more fully described, they are spoken of as אִישׁ (*ish*) man, and אִשָּׁה (*ish-sha*) woman. There is nowhere the slightest indication that originally more than one human pair had been created. Even the infidel writers Voltaire, Rousseau, Peyrere, Gibbon, Paine, and Lord Kames, insisted upon that "the unity of the human races is everywhere taught in the Bible;" but it was not in order to uphold the veracity of Scripture that they insisted upon this, but rather that they might use it as a weapon against it, for they persistently maintained "that there are distinct species—that they could not have sprung from a single pair—that in all the varieties there are impassable lines, and that the Bible, therefore, cannot be true."

The writers, however, who reject the doctrine of the unity of races, are perfectly insignificant, both in talent and number, as compared with those who maintain it. A list of names affords no very interesting reading, still as the subject is a highly important one, affecting as it does a vital scriptural doctrine, the reader, I am sure, will bear with me in giving a list of the most eminent writers at least whose opinion on this point is entirely in accord with the Bible teaching.

And here deserve first to be mentioned such renowned scholars as Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop Sumner, Chevalier Bunsen, Faber, Stanhope, Locke, Stillingfleet, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir James Mackintosh, Archbishop Whately, Lord Bacon, and Dougald Steward, who remarks: "The capacities of the human mind, have in all ages been the same, and the diversity of phenomena exhibited by our species is the result merely of the different circumstances in which men are placed."

Of very great importance is the testimony afforded by such eminent MEDICAL MEN as Prichard, Abernethy, Carpenter, Rush, McCulloch, Combe, Sir Charles Bell, Tiedemann, Sir John Richardson, Boerhave, and Johannes Muller, said to have been one of the greatest anatomists of our age.

Of the most eminent NATURALISTS who maintained the unity of races, we may mention Humboldt, Lyell, Buffon, Blumenbach, Darwin, Cuvier, Leichenbach, Erleben, Linnæus, Audubon, Sir William Hooker, Professor Buckland, and Professor Owen, who says: "I am not aware of any modification of form or size in the negro's brain, which would support the inference that the Ethiopian race would not profit by the same influences favouring mental and moral improvement, which have tended to elevate the primitively barbarous white races."

The unity of races has likewise been maintained by such eminent ETHNOGRAPHERS and LINGUISTS as Count de Gebelin, Frederick Schlegel, Abel Remusat Niebuhr, Herder, Hamilton, Count Goulianoff, Professor Vater, Sir William Jones, Gallatin, Hodgson, Sharon Turner, Grotius, Grimm, Ritter, Reichenberger, and Barrington.

To these we might add the Academy of St. Petersburg, the French Academy of Science, the Encyclopedia Metropolitana, and Brande's Encyclopedia. In order not to exhaust the reader's patience, I have selected only a few names from the long list of authorities that I have lying before me.

One of our most prominent citizens forwarded to me a book entitled "THE NEGRO, WHAT IS HIS ETHNOLOGICAL STATUS?" asking my opinion as to the correctness of the definitions given of the Hebrew terms, upon which *the writer* and his *reviewer* based their arguments to prove that *the negro is not a human being at all*. The gentleman, in his note, stated that a

friend of his had been influenced by the arguments put forward in the book, and felt anxious to know whether these Hebrew terms really admitted of such an interpretation. As this is a suitable place, I will now fulfil my promise by furnishing my reply. I may at the outset say, that as the book is written under the fictitious name "Ariel," that alone is sufficient to render the book *unworthy* of any notice. A writer who promulgates such a startling theory as "that the negro belonged to the beast creation," (p. 4), and professes to found his outrageous theory upon Scripture, ought, in all fairness, to have written under his proper name, and not, in a cowardly manner, endeavour to shield himself from the lash of criticism behind the shelter of an assumed name. It is indeed but a lame excuse to say: "We have written over a fictitious signature because the facts and the truths are all of God, and belong to God." Why then be afraid when certain of having such a solid foundation? Ariel, who professes to be so learned in Scripture, ought to have remembered the Scriptural saying: "If God be for us, who *can be* against us?" After having gone over the book, however, I must say, the only sensible thing that I could discover in the whole book is, the withholding of the author's name. The book, from beginning to end, displays such an amount of ignorance and vulgarity, that one can hardly bring oneself to believe that it has been written by a person in his proper senses. I feel quite certain the reader will be of the same opinion, by the time I have done with Ariel.

Hear this great teacher, he says: "Let me correct the orthography of this word negro: In Hebrew it is *niggar*; in Syro-Chaldaic it is *nigar*; in Latin it is *niger*; in Portuguese and other modern languages it is *negro*." (p. 37.) Now as to the two first-mentioned languages, the man must really be joking, for there is no such word to be found in any Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic Lexicon. The only word in Hebrew that approaches even in sound is the verb נָגַר (*nagar*) to flow.

In the Old Testament the *people of black colour* are always spoken of as כְּשִׁימִים (*Cushim*) *Cushites*, which, in our version, is always rendered by "Ethiopians." Hence we have the expression: "Can the כְּשִׁי (Cushi) Cushite change his skin?" (Jer. xiii. 23.) Now the Cushites were descendants of Cush, the eldest son of Ham, and grandson of Noah. It is altogether erroneous to limit the Cushites to Ethiopia, as is done in our version, for it would involve some passages of the Old Testament into utter confusion. Thus, in Gen. ii. 13, the river Gihon is said to encompass "the whole land of Cush," rendered in our version, "the whole land of Ethiopia," which is an impossibility if the river Gihon is one of the four rivers that issued from the garden of Eden. "The land of Cush," here spoken of, was a

tract of country in Arabia. In fact, the descendants of Cush apparently inhabited countries widely separated from each other. And thus we can understand how it was that Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro and wife of Moses, is, in Numb. xii. 1, called a "Cushite," (Eng. vers. "an Ethiopian.")

Ariel's next essay in Hebrew philology is, his definition of Hebrew words, which will rather startle the philologists of the present day. He remarks: "We set out with some four Hebrew words, *Adham*, *ha Adam*, designating the son of God, the *white man*, and *ish*, designating the negro or black "*man*." *Enosh* designating the mulatto, the *first-cross* of white and black, and *anshey*, designating the further cross of the white with the mulatto." (p. 97.)

This definition of the four Hebrew words is quite the opposite to what has ever been held by Hebrew critics without a single exception. They have always regarded the term *ish* to be expressive of a higher rank than the term *Adam*. But Ariel calls upon his readers not to mind what Gesenius and other Hebrew philologists say, but what the Bible says. Well, as he appeals to the Bible, to the Bible we will take him, and prove to the entire satisfaction of the reader, that according to Ariel's definition of the Hebrew words all the ancient Hebrews, from Adam to Malachi, were all negroes.

Let us now commence with Adam. In Gen. ii. 23, we read: "And (*Haadam*) the man said, this *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, on this account, she shall be called (*ish-shah*) woman, because out of (*ish*) man she was taken." Here, it will be seen, Adam calls himself *ish*, and his wife *ish-shah*, which is only the feminine form of *ish*, because she had been taken out of man. According to Ariel's definition then, of *ish*, Adam was a *negro*, and, therefore, called his wife a *negress*.

Let us now go a step further. In ch. iv. 1, we read: "And Adam knew Eve, his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten (*ish*) a man from the LORD. According to Ariel then, Cain was a *negro*. Let us now go on to Noah. In ch. vi. 9, we read; "These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a righteous (*ish*) man, and perfect he was in his generations." This righteous and perfect Noah, according to Ariel, was a *negro* also.

In Gen. xxxix. 2, it is said of Joseph, "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous (*ish*) man"; not an *Adam*, but an *ish*, therefore he must have been a *negro* also. In Exod. iv. 10, Moses speaks of himself as an *ish*: "And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not (*ish*) a man of words," (i. e., an elegant speaker).

In Deut. xxxiii. 1, Moses is spoken of as *ish Haelohim*, "the man of God," so according to Ariel's definition Moses also was a *negro*, and not a *white man*.

In 2 Chron. viii. 14, David is also called *ish Haelohim*. "the man of God." So David must have been a negro also. There is really no use of quoting any more passages, for, as I have stated, if *ish* is a term applied to the *negro*, then there is no other conclusion that we can come to, but that the people of Israel belonged to the *negro race*.

Ariel is no more fortunate in his definition of the other two Hebrew words. "*Enosh*," he observes, designates the "mulatto." Why, if Ariel's definitions are correct the *white man* is nowhere. By his making *ish* to designate the *negro*, he has made *negroes* of all the ancient Israelites including all the holy men and prophets; and now by making *enosh* to designate "the mulatto," he makes *mulattoes* of the rest of the human family. The term *enosh* is seldom used in the sense of the singular, but more commonly collectively for the *whole human race*. Thus Psalm vii. 5 :

"What is (*enosh*) man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of (Adam) man, that thou shouldst visit him?"

This verse contains what is in Hebrew poetry termed a *synonymous parallelism*, namely, where an idea is expressed in the first clause of the verse, and the same idea is repeated again, but in other words, in the second clause. "*Enosh*" and "*Adam*" in the verse are, therefore, synonymous terms, meaning one and the same thing. And yet the *enosh*, who Ariel would not allow as much as to be *human beings*, are in the next verse spoken of as being made only "a little lower than the angels."

Job uses similar language regarding the *enosh*.

"What is (*enosh*) man, that thou shouldst magnify him?
And that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him."—(Ch. vii. 7.)

We come next to the term "*anshey*," which Ariel says, "designates a further cross of the white with the mulatto." In making this statement he displays an amount of ignorance which would be unpardonable even in a Hebrew student of only six months' standing. The word אֲנָשִׁי "*anshe*" is merely the *genitive form*—or as it is in Hebrew grammar called the *construct form*—of the plural noun אֲנָשִׁים (*anashim*) *men*, which is the form commonly used as the plural of אִישׁ ("*ish*,") a *man*, which Ariel says designates "the negro:" so that, according to his own definitions, the *singular* noun *ish* denotes "the negro," and the same noun in the plural "the mulatto." Now, we have clearly shown that if "*ish*" denotes "the negro," the Hebrews must all have been *negroes*, we will now equally as clearly show that if "*anshe*" denotes "the mulatto," the Hebrews must all have been *mulattoes*.

In 1 Samuel vii. 2, we read : " And the men of Israel (*anshe Yisrael*) sent out of Mizpeh," according to Ariel it should read *the mulattoes of Israel*. This expression, and the expression (*anshe Yehudah*) *men of Judah*, occur very frequently in the Old Testament.

We have now done with Ariel, and we must say, it has happily never fallen to our lot to meet with such wilful and barefaced misconstruction of Scriptural passages as are found in Ariel's book. The whole style, however, betrays his great animosity towards the coloured race, and it is easily perceived, that the book was evidently designed to inflame the mind of the American people against it ; and in order to gain his object the writer did not scruple to have recourse to the most outrageous statements. What staggers me is, that such a *miserable production* should have required a *second edition*. Surely, there is no accounting for some people's tastes.

The language which Moses employs in verse 27 unmistakably speaks of the creation of one *man* only ; and God created **הָאָדָם** (*haädam*) the man in his own image. In the preceding verse the term **אָדָם** (*Adam*) was used to designate the human species, "and God said let us make **אָדָם** (*Adam*) man," it is *mankind*, in this verse the same term is applied to its *type* the first man. The translators have : " So God created man," omitting, in a most unaccountable way, the article which, in Hebrew, is sometimes employed with a common appellative noun, in order to restrict its application to a particular object which is pre-eminent over all others of its class. Thus **הַכֹּהֵן** (*hak-kohen*) *the priest*, i. e. the high priest. Lev. xxi. 21. **שָׂטָן** (*Satan*) *an adversary*, but **הַשָּׂטָן** (*hassatan*) *the adversary*, i. e. Satan. (Job. i. 6.) So in the passage before us **הָאָדָם** (*haädam*) "the man," the article is employed by way of pre-eminence to indicate that Adam was "the man" who was created by the immediate act of God Himself. And so again, ch. ii. 7, "and the LORD God formed **הָאָדָם** (*haädum*) the man of the dust of the ground." In a similar manner the translators have omitted the article in Isa. vii. 14, and rendered : " Behold **הַעַלְמָה** (*haälmah*) a virgin," instead of "the virgin," namely, "the virgin" of whom Immanuel was to be born.

We have seen that God Himself had bestowed the names on things after they had been called into existence, and so according to Gen. v. 11, the name Adam was likewise given by God Himself. " A male and a female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." The term **אָדָם** (*Adam*) can therefore not be a mere meaningless name : let us then inquire what may be its import.

A great many critics have derived the term אָדָם (*Adam*) from אֲדָמָה (*Adamah*) the ground, in reference to Adam having been formed of the dust of the ground. This, at first sight, seems to be a very plausible derivation, and no wonder that it has been adopted by so many commentators. And, yet, there are two great objections to deriving the word in this manner. In the first place, the term *Adam* in that case would be as applicable to "the beast of the field," and "the fowl of the air," which were likewise formed from the ground, according to Gen. ii. 19, and hence, would form no distinctive appellation of the human species. Further, and I beg to draw the reader's particular attention to this point, in the account of the creation of man, his *earthly origin* is not so much dwelt upon as his heavenly origin. In Gen. i. 27, where the creation of man is spoken of, his earthly origin is not even alluded to. It is only in ch. ii. 7, where the creation of man is more fully described, that his *earthly origin* is mentioned.

In the second place, it is quite against the genius of the Hebrew language to derive *masculine* from feminine nouns. In the Hebrew the masculine nouns have the simplest form, and from them the corresponding feminine names are formed by adding the *feminine ending*. Thus we have אִישׁ (*ish*) a man, אִשָּׁה (*ish-shah*) a woman. נָעָר (*naär*) a boy, נַעֲרָה (*na-ärah*) a girl, but not *vice versa*, this peculiarity seems to intimate the fact of the priority of man's creation. Now as אֲדָמָה (*adamah*) the ground, is a feminine noun; it would be altogether against this rule to derive the term אָדָם (*Adam*) which is masculine, from it.

Seeing these objections, by far the more numerous writers have fallen back upon the more common mode of deriving nouns, namely, from the verb, and hence, have derived the term אָדָם (*Adam*) from the verb אָדָם (*adam*) to be red or ruddy, in reference to the ruddy or flesh tint of the countenance peculiar to the Caucasian race. Now, whilst there cannot be the slightest objection urged to such a derivation on philological grounds, still, there is this great objection, as the term is a generic term of the human species, it would, therefore, not be an appropriate one to a very large portion of the human family. Indeed, we would here have to fight a battle with the Chinese, for they, in order to suit their complexion, insist upon man having been formed from *yellow earth*. For my part—even leaving the objections which I have mentioned altogether out of the question—I have always regarded that the word אָדָם (*Adam*) would be more suitably derived from the verb דָּמָה (*damah*) to resemble, to be alike, because man was created בְּדִמְיוֹת אֱלֹהִים (*bidmuth Elohim*) "in the likeness of God," (Gen. v. 1,) the Hebrew word for *likeness* being also derived from the verb דָּמָה (*damah*), to be alike.

Some Hebraists may probably ask me to account for the letter א in the word אָדָם (*Adam*) if derived from דָּמָה (*damah*). I answer, that it must be taken as a *formative* letter employed sometimes in forming nouns from the verb אָרַבָה (*arbeh*) a locust, from רָבָה (*ravah*), to multiply. אֶקְדַּח (*ekdach*) a sparkling gem, from קָדַח (*kadach*) to kindle.

29. *And God said, Behold, I have given to you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the whole face of the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food.*

30. *And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of heaven, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every herb for food; and it was so.*

From these two verses it appears that at first God appointed the fruits and herbs only as food both for man and beast. Man was to subsist upon seed bearing plants and the fruits of trees, whilst the animals were to feed upon herbs and the grass of the fields. There was to be no destroying of life, but peace and concord was to reign among all creatures. And as it was at first before sin, and with it all other evils entered the world, so it shall be in the happy and glorious time of the Messiah, when sin shall again disappear, and universal peace shall be restored to all creatures. Then the wolf and the lamb, and the leopard and the kid, will again lie down together, and the lion, like the ox, will again eat straw, as at the time when they were created. When the little child shall lead them; and the sucking child, without fear of harm, may play on the hole of the deadly asp; and the weaned child may lay his hand upon the viper's den. (See Isaiah xi. 8.)

The ancient philosophers, Plato, Pythagoras, and his followers, regarded it as a great crime to kill animals for food. They considered the earth brought forth an abundance of vegetables, so that there was no necessity for killing harmless creatures merely to gratify the appetite of man. One of the five great laws of the Buddhists likewise forbids the destruction of any living creatures. In modern times Swedenborg, Rousseau, Schelly, and many other eminent men likewise maintained that vegetables and fruits constituted the proper food for man, containing, as they affirm, all the principles necessary for the sustenance of life. They further hold, that an entire vegetable diet is even conducive to longevity, and renders life more enjoyable; that the brain becomes more vigorous under such a diet, and the body less susceptible to disease, whilst the strength necessary for manual labour is no less than with an animal diet. This being the case, the vegetarians consider it unnecessary and cruel to kill innocent animals. In 1847, a society was

formed in England whose object it was to promote vegetarianism in that country, and a few years later a similar society was established in the United States. The general opinion of physiologists is, however, not favourable to vegetarianism, and almost all medical men declare in favour of a mixed diet. Much, no doubt, depends both on the custom and the climate.

From the expression, in ch. vii. 3, "and behold I will destroy them with the earth," it is evident that the earth was also to suffer on account of the great wickedness of man. The flood, whilst it swept away every living thing except those preserved in the ark, was also to bring destruction upon the earth itself. In what manner and to what extent the earth's condition became changed, it is impossible to say, since we have no information as to its state before the flood. We may, however, reasonably infer, that as the permission to use animal food was given to Noah immediately on his coming out of the ark, the changed condition of the earth, rendered such food at least beneficial if not altogether necessary. And this circumstance furnishes another proof of God's ever merciful and gracious dealings with men.

31. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

The work of creation being now finished, the sacred writer represents God as surveying all He had made, and declaring it perfect in every respect, all things answering the end for which they were designed. The completion of the work of creation on "the sixth day" is also indicated by the use of *the article* with that day, whilst with the other days it is omitted in the original, although it is given in the English version. Literally rendered it would read "first day," "second day," &c., but here we have "the sixth day," as much as to say, *the day* on which the work of creation was completed. I have already had occasion to state that in Hebrew *the article* is sometimes employed with an object to give it prominence above its kind, and so here, the article distinguishes "the sixth day," above the other days.

But, it may probably be asked, why was the work of creation spread over six days, when the Almighty might have affected all in a moment? To this may be answered, one reason apparently was—though there may be other reasons unknown to us finite beings—to lay the foundation for the institution of the Sabbath as a day of rest, and to be religiously observed.

The six days of creation are to serve an example to mankind that he is not to spend his days in idleness, but in useful occupation, in fact, the work of God should be the type of the work of man. And as God rested on the seventh day, and sanctified

it, although He requires no rest, for He "is never fatigued nor weary (Isa. xl. 29); so man should rest from his work on that day, and keep it holy.

Before entering on the second chapter, it is but right to refer to a theory which has not only been adopted by many naturalists, but likewise by many commentators, and whose opinion has been also espoused by many of their readers. The theory in question is generally known as *the period theory*, and holds, that "the six days" mentioned in Gen. i., are nothing less than "six indefinite periods of time," embracing millions of years.

Now, it is by no means difficult to understand why this theory should have found so many advocates among naturalists, they require indefinite ages for the formation of the different strata, and this theory would entirely furnish—though not more lavishly than the theory which we have advanced—the required time. Then, again, it is an easy mode of getting over the difficulty, without apparently casting a shadow of doubt upon the veracity of the Mosaic account. It requires but a change of the word *day* into *period*, and to all appearance the difficulty is overcome. It is, of course, hardly to be expected that naturalists would stop to enquire whether the Hebrew word יום (*yom*) *day*, admits of such an interpretation, much less is it to be expected that they would carefully examine whether such a rendering would be suitable to the context, or how it would affect other passages of Scripture. For naturalists, I say, such an inquiry could hardly be expected, but I must confess that it is somewhat surprising that this theory should have found so much favour among commentators, whose chief aim should be to harmonize, and not to create confusion, to explain, and not to perplex; and to reconcile without violating the common usage of language.

In order to show the utter fallacy of this theory, or as Dr. Kalisch, in his Commentary, remarks regarding it, how "readily it crumbles to pieces at the mere touch," I propose to examine it in a threefold aspect. It will show to my readers, that I do not treat the theories of other writers, who may differ from me, in an off-hand manner; but, on the contrary, show them the fullest respect.

In the first place, then, we will inquire whether this theory would, after all, remove all difficulties in reconciling the Mosaic account with the discoveries made in geology. Secondly, whether the substituting of the term *period* for *day* is suitable to the context. And thirdly, whether the rendering of the Hebrew word יום (*yom*) by *period* is authorized by Scriptural usage.

As the choice apparently lies between this theory and the one which I have given in my comments on the chapter, I

crave the reader's particular attention to the following remarks:

According to the Mosaic narrative all plants and trees were created on the *third day*. The creatures inhabiting the waters, and the fowl of the air, on the *fifth day*; whilst the creatures inhabiting the dry ground were not created until the *sixth day*. Now we are told by geologists that animals are found as deep in the rocks as vegetables; indeed it would appear that shells, fishes, and reptiles existed long before the period of plants which are compressed in the carboniferous beds. Let us hear what the distinguished geologist, the late Hugh Miller, says on the subject: All geologists agree in holding that the vast geological scale naturally divides into three great parts. There are many lesser divisions—divisions of systems, formations, deposits, beds, strata, but the master divisions, in each of which we find a type of life so unlike that of others, that even the unpractised eye can detect the difference, are simply three—the palæozoic, or oldest fossiliferous division, the secondary or middle fossiliferous division, and the tertiary or latest fossiliferous division. In the first the palæozoic division, we find corals, crustaceans, mollusks, fishes; and, in its later formation a few reptiles. But none of these classes give its leading character to the palæozoic; they do not constitute its prominent feature, or render it more remarkable as a scene of life than any of the divisions which follows. That which chiefly distinguished the palæozoic from the second and tertiary periods was its gorgeous flora." In like manner he describes graphically the other two great divisions. The middle division he characterizes "as an egg-bearing animals, winged and wingless. Its wonderful whales, not, however, as new of mammalian, but of reptilian class." In speaking of the tertiary period, he remarks, that it has also "its prominent class of existencies." Its flora seems to have been no more conspicuous than that of the present time; its reptiles occupy a very subordinate place, but its beasts of the field were by far the most wonderfully developed, both in size and numbers, that ever appeared on earth." (Testimony of the Rocks, pp. 135, 169.)

Now, at first sight, these three grand divisions certainly appear in a measure to agree with the third, the fifth, and the sixth days of the Mosaic account, but on a closer examination they will be found to present such difficulties as render a reconciliation with the Biblical account utterly impossible. According to the Mosaic account, on the *third day* nothing but plants were created; but Hugh Miller says, and he affirms that all geologists agree in it, "the first grand division, the palæozoic," which is supposed to answer to the third day's creation, contains also *fishes* and *reptiles*, which, according to the Biblical account, were

only created on the fifth day, so that, according to the period theory, *two indefinite ages of thousands and thousands of years must have elapsed* between the creation of *plants* and that of *fishes* and *reptiles*, during which time the constant formation of these strata were steadily proceeding, and, the first grand division, ought, therefore, to contain only fossils of the vegetable kingdom, and not a single fossil of either fishes or reptiles should be found there.

Then, again, it appears from the above extracts, that it is an admitted fact, that "in each of the master divisions there is to be found a type of life so unlike that of the others, that even an unpractised eye can detect the difference." Now new types presuppose new creations, M. D'Orbigny the eminent French naturalist has distinctly asserted, that "not a single species of the preceding period survived the last of these catastrophes; which closed the Tertiary period and ushered in the Human period." (See Essays and Reviews, p. 263.)

Where then, I would ask, have all the creatures that inhabit our globe now come from, unless they had been created by the Almighty, as is recorded in Genesis 1. So far, then, from the Bible narrative teaching anything adverse to geology, geology itself becomes an undoubted witness of the truthfulness of the Mosaic account.

Now, if it is a certain fact that new creations must have taken place from time to time in order to replace these plants and animals that have previously perished by catastrophes, we may well ask, what advantages does the period theory afford, even supposing there were no philological or other objections to it? Is it not, by far more reasonable to suppose, that the Mosaic account describes merely the commencement of the *Fourth* or *Human period*, commencing with a brief description of the state of our globe as it existed when Moses commenced his narrative, namely, that "the earth was void and waste, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep," and then proceeding to inform us how the earth was again replenished with plants and animals, and, above all, how man was created? I would again remind the reader of the admitted fact that there has never yet been found either a single fossil of any of the now existing species which could possibly connect *our period* with that of the *tertiary period* of the geologists, or a fossil remain belonging to the human species, except those already alluded to, and which, as we have shown, are of but recent formation. If we take this view of the subject, surely there is nothing in the first chapter of Genesis which can be said to teach anything adverse to the discoveries which have been made in the natural sciences. There is not even an allusion made in the

chapter to any of the preceding periods, except what is contained in the general statement in the first verse.

But there is yet another difficulty which the *period theory* presents, which, alone, if there were no others, is altogether fatal to it. According to the sacred narrative the vegetable kingdom was created on the "third day," and if that really means a geological period or age, then it must have been a sunless, moonless, and starless age, since these were only created on the fourth day; and it follows, that the term "evening" must then mean a *long period of uninterrupted darkness*, whilst the term "morning" must, on the other hand, mean an equally *long period of uninterrupted light*. Such a state of things would soon have been fatal to vegetable life, no plants or trees could possibly have survived such an ordeal. Any one who has ever tried to keep alive a few plants in a dark place during a few winter months may form some notion how utterly impossible it would be for plants to exist through, perhaps, thousands of years of uninterrupted darkness. And yet such must inevitably have been the case according to the *period theory*.

The celebrated botanist, J. H. Balfour, in his "Class Book of Botany," a work used in many colleges, says: "If a plant is kept in darkness it soon becomes dropsical, because the roots continue slowly to absorb moisture, while the leaves have no power to exhale." (See page 450.)

And yet we find that the grass and herbs, created on the "third day," were, on the "sixth day," appointed for food, both for man and animals, which clearly demonstrates that they could not have been subjected to such an ordeal.

Hugh Miller evidently perceived this difficulty, and endeavoured to get over it, by supposing the sun, moon, and stars to have been created long before. He says: "Let me, however, pause for a moment to mark the peculiar character of the language in which we are first introduced, in the Mosaic narrative to the heavenly bodies,—sun, moon, and stars. The moon, though absolutely one of the smallest lights of our system, is described as secondary and subordinate to only its greatest light, the sun. It is the apparent, then, not the actual, which we find in the passage, what *seemed* to be, not what *was*: and, as it was merely what appeared to be the greatest that was described as the greatest, on what grounds are we to hold that it may not also have been what *appeared* at the time to be made that has been described as made? The sun, moon, and stars, may have long been created before, though it was not until the fourth day of creation that they became visible from the earth's surface." (Testimony of the Rocks, p. 134.)

Precisely so, it is just what I said, when commenting on Gen. i. 14. If these luminaries were created long before, though not visible until the fourth day of creation, it follows that *our globe*, which forms a part of the planetary system, must likewise have been created long before the first day of creation, and, therefore, the account contained in Gen. i. does not furnish a cosmogony of the earth further than what is contained in the first verse of that chapter, and there is, therefore, nothing to be gained by adopting the *period theory*, even if it were admissible.

From the foregoing remarks, it will now be seen that however plausible the *period theory* may at first sight appear, on closer examination, as Dr. Kalisch very justly has remarked, "it crumbles to pieces."

Then, when we come to examine this theory, as to its agreement with the context, and its effect on other passages of Scripture, we are met at every step with such insurmountable difficulties that one begins to wonder how such a theory could ever have been seriously advanced. Let any one sit down, and write the sentence, "*There was evening and there was morning the first period*," and calmly look at it, and I feel persuaded he will at once come to the conclusion, that no writer would ever use such a phrase in conveying an idea which he wishes to be readily understood. We use the phrase "*morning and evening of life*" figuratively for *youth and old age*, but such a phrase as *evening and morning of a period*, we unhesitatingly assert has never been penned by any writer in any known language. But even if the terms *evening* and *morning* were suitable terms to be used in connection with *period*, surely the proper way of expressing it would be *morning and evening of a period*—for in such a connection *morning* could only be used instead of *beginning*, and *evening* instead of *end*—otherwise we would have the *end* before we have the *beginning* of a *period*. No such difficulty arises in the explanation we have given in the Commentary, where we have shown that the mentioning of *evening* before *morning* accords well with the existing state of darkness before the *light* was made to appear.

Then, again, we are met with the stubborn fact—and which I hold in itself to be altogether fatal to the period theory—that if the six days of the creation are six periods, the seventh day must likewise be an *indefinite period*. Then, what becomes of our *Sabbath*? Is that likewise an *indefinite period*? If so, what becomes of the fourth commandment? (Exod. xx. 9, 10, 11.) Let any one read that commandment, and substitute *period* for *day*, and he will find that it is rendered utterly incomprehensible. Yet that commandment cannot possibly be separated from the six days of creation, for the last verse assigns the reason why the *Sabbath* should be kept holy,

namely, "For in six days the LORD made (ordered or fashioned) heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day, and hallowed it." Then, again, in Exod. xxxi. 12-18, we have this commandment enlarged upon, and the punishment for not keeping it assigned, namely, "every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doth *any* work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people."—(v. 14.) And, in the following verse, "whosoever doth *any* work on the Sabbath day, shall surely be put to death." Now, how could the Israelites have kept the Sabbath day, if it meant an indefinite period of rest? In Acts i. 12, "Mount Olivet" is said to be "from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey." What would that mean if *the day* meant an indefinite period?

I may add here, that from the six days of creation and the seventh day of rest, the numeral *seven* obtained a special significance throughout the Scriptures. Thus, we have the gift of "seven" animals in making a covenant, (Gen. xxi. 28, 29, 30): "seven lamps" in the golden candlestick, (Exod. xxx. 23); the blood was sprinkled "seven times," (Lev. iv. 6.) It also used to express a round indefinite number, as Isa. iv. 1; and seven women shall lay hold on one man in that day.* It is a large number. So Prov. xxvi. 25,

"When he speaketh fair, believe him not;
For there are seven abominations in his heart."

It is, a *great many* abominations.

It is even employed to express a *climax*, as Job v. 19:

"In six troubles he will deliver thee,
Yea in seven no evil shall touch thee."

That is, *no evil* shall befall thee at any time.

See also Ps. xii. 7: (Eng. vers. v. 6.) There is no number which is so frequently employed in Scripture as the number seven.

Will any one, after giving the above remarks an impartial consideration, still hold there are no objections on Scriptural ground to rendering the term יָוֹם (*yom*) day, by *period* in Genesis i.? I can hardly think there is. And yet, this is not all. When we come to examine the period theory from a philological stand point, we find that the language employed equally presents insurmountable difficulties to its adoption. In

*This passage can only be understood when taken in connection with the Prophet's declaration at the close of the preceding chapter, that the number of slain in the land shall be so great, that there shall be only one man left to a large number of women.

order to show this conclusively, let us examine the very passages that have been appealed to by the period theorists as favouring their hypothesis.

It is maintained that the Hebrew term יוֹם (*yom*) *day*, is often used not strictly in a sense of a *day*, but sometimes indefinitely, and the first passage referred to is Gen. ii, 4, where it is said: "In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens." It is urged here that the term בְּיוֹם (*beyom*), "In the day," is here used to denote the whole six days of creation. Now, any one that has but a moderate acquaintance with Hebrew idioms must know that Hebrews, in speaking of a time when an action took place, always expressed it by בְּיוֹם (*beyom*) *in the day*, and is, in that case, only equivalent to the adverb *when*, which, in all cases, would make just as good sense, namely, "when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens." The word "that" is not in the original, and ought to have been given in italics in our version. So again in verse 17, literally: "For in the day of thy eating of it thou shalt surely die." It is, "when thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die." Also Exod. x, 28: "See my face no more; for in *that day* thou seest my face," it is, "when thou seest my face *again* thou shalt die." On referring to a concordance any number of such examples may be found. But I maintain, that in not a single instance in the prosaic writings is the term יוֹם (*yom*) *day* used in an indefinite sense without the preposition (בְּ) *in*. To bring forward such a common idiom of the language in support of their theory is certainly exemplifying the old proverb: "A drowning man will catch at a straw."

Again, Ps. xc. 4, has been appealed to, where it says, "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch of the night." It is proper to state, that in the original it is "as a day of yesterday," that is, *a day gone by*. Surely any one can see, that this passage merely describes the eternity of the Deity as having no limits. It expresses a comparison, and if the preposition (כְּ) "*as*" were removed, it would make no sense at all. So the passage in 2 Peter iii. 8: "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." It is, "one day" is in the sight of the Lord as "a thousand years," and "a thousand years" are in the sight of the Lord as "one day." These passages, so far from arguing in favour of their theory, actually argue against it, since in both passages the word "day" necessarily means a *natural day*.

Again, Job viii. 2, has been referred to, where the term יוֹם (*yom*) *day*, is said to be used to denote at least a part of the human life. The passage reads: "They that come after him shall be astonished at his day." The term יוֹמָו (*yomo*) "his

day" is here poetically used "for his day of calamity," namely, that of the wicked spoken of in verse 5, and belongs, therefore, to the same category of figurative expression, such as "the day of their misfortune," Deut. (xxxii. 35); "the day of Jerusalem," i. e., the day when Jerusalem was taken, (Ps. lxxxvii. 7); "day of darkness," i. e., day of destruction awaiting the wicked, (Job xv. 23); "the day of salvation," (Isa. xlix. 8). So also, the expression so frequently employed "in that day," (Isa. xxii. 12.) Such expressions like the above, are merely Biblical metaphors, and are altogether restricted to the poetical and prophetic portions of Scripture, and even there not in a single instance can they possibly give rise to conjecture, for their meaning is invariably rendered clear by the context. To bring forward such passages as the above in support of the theory that the word יוֹם (*yom*) day in Genesis i. may mean an indefinite period of time, is simply the height of absurdity.

The Hebrew word יוֹם (*yom*) day, is, in the prosaic books of the Old Testament, used about 140 times, but not in a single instance is it used in any other sense than a natural day, when it stands in its simple form like it does in Genesis i., without a preposition or suffix. Nor is it used in any other sense than that, in any of its cognate languages, the Chaldee, Syriac, or even the Arabic, which is still a widely spoken language.

I repeat, therefore, in the Mosaic account of the creation, which is a plain, simple, and purely historical narrative, the word יוֹם (*yom*) day, cannot possibly be taken in any other sense, than that of a natural day, defined too, as it is, by the words "evening" and "morning."

But further it may reasonably be asked, why should Moses have used the ambiguous term day, when he meant a period, in such an important narrative, which was intended to be readily understood by all classes of readers? Is it not more reasonable to suppose, that in that case he would rather have used the words רֵאשִׁית (*reshith*) beginning, and קֵץ (*kets*) end and עַתָּה (*eth*) time, and would have written, *and the beginning was and the end was time one*. Or the sacred writer might have used the term עוֹלָם (*olam*) which, from its derivation, denotes a hidden or indefinite period of time, of which the beginning and end is uncertain, and is used in the sense of a long period or long time in Isa. xlii. 14. It cannot, therefore, be said, that the sacred writer had no words at his command to express an indefinite period of time, which would at once have been more intelligible and more suitable had he intended to convey that meaning in Genesis i., but not having used any of these terms clearly shows, by using the term יוֹם (*yom*) day, he meant that that word should be taken in its proper sense.

I have now, and hope fairly, examined *the period theory* in the three different aspects, and have, I think, clearly shown, that not in any one of them will it stand the slightest test. Whether the arguments which I have adduced are deemed sufficiently conclusive, is for the reader to decide.

For my part, I have never seen any difficulty in the natural day theory which I have advanced in the Commentary, yet I do by no means insist upon that it is the only possible explanation: there may be another one, but whatever that one may be, I feel certain, it is not the one afforded by *the period theory*.

CHAP. II.

1. "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*"

This verse appropriately connects the chapter with the preceding one, of which it is a continuation, and at the same time serves as an introduction to the institution of the sacred day of rest. The term **צְבָא** (*tsava*) primarily denotes a *host* or *army* properly marshalled for battle, but is also applied to the angelic host which surrounds the throne of God. And as the heavenly bodies move in regular order, hence it is also sometimes metaphorically used in reference to them. "And the host of heaven shall be dissolved." (Isa. xxxiv. 4.) In the verse above, "and all the host of them," it is figuratively applied to all that the earth, the waters, and the air contains. Hence, as God is the Creator of all things, He is sometimes spoken of as "the God of Hosts," "the LORD God of Hosts."

2. "*And God had finished His work on the seventh day which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.*"

The rendering of the verse in our version is very ambiguous: "And on the seventh day God ended His work." According to this translation God ended His work on the seventh day, and yet rested on that day. The Septuagint, the Syriac, and Samaritan versions read: "And God ended on the sixth day," instead of "on the seventh;" but there is not the slightest authority for

the substitution of *the sixth* instead of * *the seventh*. Von Bohlen, and other critics of the same school, get over the difficulty in their usual ready manner by regarding it an *inaccuracy*. But where is the difficulty of rendering as we have done, "and God had finished His work"? The existence of a *pluperfect tense* in the Hebrew language is fully established by other passages, although some modern grammarians deny its existence. If we turn to Exod. xii. 15, we shall find quite an analogous case: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even on the first day ye shall have put away leaven out of your houses." It is again incorrectly rendered in our version, "even on the first day ye shall put away," for it is distinctly commanded in verse 16, that no work was to be done on "the first day," and on "the seventh day" * * "except that which every man must eat." And, further, in verse 18 it is plainly stated that the eating of unleavened bread was to begin "at even" of the "fourteenth day of the month," so that on the *fifteenth* which is the *first day* of the passover, the *leaven* must have already been removed. (See also 2 Chron. xxix. 17.)

3. *And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; for on it He rested from all His work which God created and made.*

Surely those who would make light of the observance of the Sabbath day can hardly have fully considered the import of this verse. None of the festivals afterwards instituted have such a sacred foundation: the Sabbath of God is the type of the Sabbath of man. The importance of the sacred day of rest is further indicated by being the first of all religious observances given to man. The Scriptures, as a writer has well observed, "make the Sabbath the corner stone of the moral world."

Some writers have indeed laboured to prove, that because there is no special mention made of the observance of the Sabbath among the patriarchs, and the Israelites in Egypt, it was first appointed with the Decalogue on Mount Sinai, and that it is merely mentioned here by *anticipation*. But the very reading of the *fourth commandment* shows that it already existed as an established law. "Remember the Sabbath day," these words are equivalent to, *do not neglect the Sabbath day*. Besides, we find already, in Exod. xvi. 25, 26, whilst the Israel-

* Some commentators, and among them Dr. Adam Clark, have supposed that the word *sixth* might easily have been changed into *seventh*, if letters were used in ancient times to express numerals, the letters ך (waw) six, ז (zain) seven, being almost similar in form. But it is not at all likely that letters were used in expressing numerals in the ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament, for if such had been the case they would have been retained, as the Jews regarded the original text too sacred to meddle with it.

ites were yet in the wilderness of Sin, before they had arrived at Mount Sinai, Moses forbade them to gather Manna on the Sabbath: "And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a Sabbath unto the LORD; to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is the Sabbath*, in it there shall be none." Let the reader mark the language here employed. Moses does not say, *the seventh day which will hereafter be appointed as the Sabbath*; but "the seventh day, *which is the Sabbath*," already instituted. Then when, notwithstanding the prohibition, some of the people went out to gather Manna, but found none, God was angry at their disobedience, and said unto Moses: "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws. See, that the LORD hath given you the Sabbath."—(v. 28, 29. Not will give you the Sabbath.

These commentators who regard the passage in Gen. ii. to be proleptical, have so far failed to assign any reason why the sacred historian should assert that God had set apart the seventh day to be kept holy 2,500 years before He really intended it to be observed. What object could Moses have had in referring to the institution of the Sabbath at all at such an early date, when generations were to pass away before its actual promulgation as a law? Until a satisfactory answer is given to this question, the antiquity of the Sabbath may fairly be argued from the statement contained in the second chapter.

But incontestible proof of the observance of the seventh day as a *sacred day* from the very beginning of time, may be drawn also from the religious ceremonies and practices of the ancient heathens. Archbishop Usher observes: "That the heathen had their knowledge of God and of the Sabbath from the first fathers who lived before the dispersion."—(Disc. on the Sabbath, p. 73.) Newton, in his Dissertations, remarks: "It cannot be doubted that our first parents religiously observed so solemn an ordinance (the Sabbath), though no express mention is made of it after in the history of Moses, and from hence, in the most early ages, was derived the practice of reckoning their time by weeks. Computing and calling the days after the number and names of the planets was an invention of a later date, when some progress had been made in the study of astronomy, and when idolatry had prevailed, and the sun and stars were worshipped."

Linus, a cotemporary with Orpheus, who is said to have lived in the 13th century before the Christian era, speaks of "a seventh day observed among the devout." Hesiod, one of the earliest Greek poets of whom we possess any information, born about the 8th century B. C., calls the seventh day, "The illustrious light of the sun"; and Homer, who probably flour-

ished about two centuries before Solomon, says: "Then came the seventh day, which is sacred and holy." The eminent poet and critic, Callimachus, who flourished about the middle of the third century B. C., speaks of the *Ethnics*, a very ancient sect of philosophers, as observing the seventh day as a sacred and holy day. Later, Aulus Gellius, a Latin author, who flourished about the third century of the Christian era, likewise states that "the *Ethnics* gave public instruction on the seventh day." In the Arkite temples sacred cakes were offered on the seventh day. The Arkite worship was extremely ancient. Lucian says, that on the seventh day scholars were permitted to relax from their studies. Aristotle insinuates, that seven is the number of which the world (that is, the system,) is composed. Alexander Aphrodisiensis declared that the number seven is perfect in its own nature, because God governs the earth by the seven planets. Macrobius and a number of other writers declared that seven is a religious number. The *Saturnalia* among the Romans, were days set apart in December for the rites of Saturn, and were in number seven. Eusebius also states, that not only the Hebrews, but almost all the philosophers and poets acknowledged the seventh day as more holy than the rest. Josephus against Apion remarks, that "in his time there was not a city of the Grecians, nor any Barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, where the Jewish custom of resting on the Sabbath day had not reached." He speaks of it as if the custom had been adopted from the Hebrews, but it is by no means likely that the heathens who hated the Jews and their religion, would adopt any of their customs or rites. Philo Judæus was certainly not of opinion that the heathens had derived the custom from the Israelites, for he says: "The Sabbath is not a festival peculiar to any one people or country, but it is common to the whole world." Grotius shows at some length, that not only throughout the East, but even among the Greeks, the Italians, the Celtæ, the Sclavi, and even the Romans themselves, the days were divided into weeks, and that the seventh day was held in extraordinary veneration.

Now, the almost universal practice of dividing time into weeks among the civilized and uncivilized nations, not excluding even the Ashantees, a nation inhabiting a large district of Western Africa, and than whom scarcely can be found a more barbarous people; and the hardly less prevailing custom of ascribing more or less sanctity to the seventh day, and paying great reverence to the number seven, furnish, in my opinion, incontestible proofs of the observance of the Sabbath from the beginning of time as recorded by the sacred historian. Such a universal custom must have had its com-

mencement when mankind were yet united in one common centre, at some period before the dispersion, and, if so, it will not be difficult to trace it back to Noah and his family.

But, we are asked, how is it to be accounted for, if such a *hebdomadal rest* had at all time been observed from the beginning of time, that not so much as an allusion to it can be found until the Israelites arrived in the wilderness of Sin? The simple answer is, that the sacred historian did not find it necessary to notice it. He mentions the fact, that God had solemnly set apart the seventh day to be kept holy, and the pious patriarchs having, no doubt, strictly observed the day as a sacred day of rest, no special reference to it was rendered necessary. There is nowhere, I believe, any allusion made to the Israelites having observed the Sabbath during the first four hundred years after their entrance into the land of Canaan, yet our opponents would hardly argue from this circumstance, that it had not been regularly and strictly observed during this long period. There are likewise but few direct allusions to the indispensable duty of *prayer* throughout the whole of the Pentateuch, yet no one ever doubted that this duty was regularly and cheerfully attended to.

There is, however, a statement in Gen. iv. 26, of which our opponents seem to have taken no notice whatever, although it is very important in the discussion of the antiquity of the Sabbath. We read there: "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began *men* to invoke the name of the LORD." (Eng. vers., "to call upon the name of the LORD.") From the frequent occurrence of the phrase "to invoke the name of the LORD," its true import evidently is, the offering up of prayer either in private or in public assembly. (See Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 4; Ps. lxxix, 6; cv. 1; Is. xii. 4.) At first when the human family consisted only of a few persons, the worship of God naturally would assume the form of family prayer; but when the families became numerous, and began to take up their abode at a distance from one another, congregations would be formed who would meet together at stated times for the purpose of public supplication and religious instruction. Now it appears to me that Moses here refers to the beginning of public worship at stated times—for Adam and his offspring, had, no doubt, before this offered prayers in their families—and the public worship itself would naturally imply the keeping of the Sabbath. We must bear in mind, that the account contained in the Pentateuch runs over a period of 2553 years, according to Calmet's chronological table, or according to that of Hales, over a period of 3803 years; hence, many occurrences would necessarily be but slightly touched upon, leaving any further information on these subjects to be gathered from the

context. Thus, for example, the wife of Cain is merely incidentally alluded to (ch. iv. 17), without giving her name, or telling who she was, but from the context it is evident that she must have been his sister, and though inter-marriages of near kinship were under the Mosaic code accounted incest, yet in the beginning such intermarriage of the nearest kinship could not possibly be avoided, as the human family sprung from one primitive pair.

In verses 23, 24, we have the address of Lamech to his two wives abruptly introduced without any connection with what precedes or follows, and without the slightest hint as to what gave rise to the animated speech. And so we might go on enumerating many other subjects which are merely briefly touched upon. It is, therefore, altogether fallacious to argue from the mere absence of a direct mention of the keeping of the Sabbath by the patriarchs, that it must have been instituted at a later period.

In the last part of verse 3 we have a beautiful Hebrew idiom which is entirely lost in translation. It is rendered in our version, "which God created and made," but, according to the Hebrew idiom, its meaning really is, "which God created *in the most perfect manner*."

It appears from other passages, that the *infinitive* of the verb עָשָׂה (*asah*) to make to do, is sometimes used after another verb to indicate that the action expressed by the preceding verb is done in *the most perfect manner*. In Eccl. ii. 11, we have a beautiful example of this idiom: "And I looked on all my works that my hands have wrought, and on the labour שְׁעַמְלָתִי לַעֲשׂוֹת (*she-amal-ti la-asoth*) that I laboured to do, (*i. e., in the most perfect manner*) and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit." For other examples, see Hebrew Bible, Judg. xiii. 19; Ps. cxxvi. 2; Joel ii. 20, 21.

4. *This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.*

Commentators do by no means agree as regards the application of this verse, for whilst some take the verse as referring to the account of the creation recorded in chapter i., others, and especially among the more recent writers, regard it as forming the heading of what follows, and as implying the development and further progress of the world. Now, as chapter ii. is merely a continuation of chapter i., and affords a more detailed account of some of the subjects that had been but briefly touched upon in the first chapter, whilst at the same time it continues to develop the history of man, it appears to me more reasonable to consider the verse as refer-

ring both to what precedes and follows, which, in fact, form but *one account*. I cannot comprehend how Keil and Delitzsch, among others, can persist in holding that the verse forms "the heading of what follows," (see vol. 1 p. 70,) and yet maintain that "The account in chapter ii. 5-25, is not a second, complete and independent history of the creation." (See p. 76.) If it is not "an independent history of the creation," it must form part of the history contained in chapter i., and if so, the words, "This is the account of the heavens and the earth," &c., cannot possibly be restricted merely to that portion of the creation contained in chapter ii.

It is maintained that the phrase *אלה תולדות* (*elleh tholedoth*) *this is the account or history*, wherever it occurs forms a *heading* to what follows, this is, no doubt, true, but in all the other passages it is used in a different sense to what it is here. The primary meaning of (*toledoth*.) and in which it is generally used is, *generations*, as Gen. x. 1: "These are (*toledoth*) the generations of the sons of Noah." It is, however, also used sometimes in the more restricted sense of *family history*, as Gen. vi. 9, "This is (*toledoth*) the family history of Noah," and again chapter xxxvii. 2, "This is (*toledoth*) the family history of Jacob," rendered in the English version, "these are the generations," a rendering which is not suitable to the context in these two passages.

In the passage under consideration the sacred writer uses the word in a more comprehensive sense, and applies it to the account of the origin of the heavens and the earth, as recorded in ch. i. and ch. ii. The rendering of the English version: "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth," is not only ambiguous but also unsuitable, as *generations* applies rather to persons than things. Rabbi Sol. Hakkohen, in his German version printed in Hebrew characters, has rendered "Dies ist die Entstehungsgeschichte, i. e., *This is *the history of the origin*, and so likewise Delitzsch, Gesenius, and most modern commentators.

We must, in the next place, notice the peculiar expression at the end of the verse, "the earth and the heavens." As in the physical arrangement of the universe the earth is dependent upon the heavens, hence the latter are always mentioned before the earth, but as the events in the narrative which follow transpired upon the earth, the sacred writer very appropriately gives it here special prominence by mentioning it before the heavens. This unusual mode of expression occurs

*The word *תולדות* (*toledoth*) always occurs in the plural although, as we have above seen, it is sometimes used with a singular signification—since a *history* or an *account* is made up of different events.

only once more in Scripture, namely, Ps. cxlviii. 13, where the Psalmist uses it in calling upon all that the earth contains to praise the LORD.

"Praise ye the name of the LORD;
For His name alone is excellent,
His glory is above the earth and heaven."

The sacred historian, the reader will perceive, introduces in the verse under consideration, also a new title, (*Jehovah Elohim*) i. e., "LORD God," and which is retained throughout this and the following chapter. This brings us face to face with the now famous "Elohistic and Jehovistic controversy," which for so many years past has raged with undiminished fierceness in Germany, and at last made its way into England and America. The controversy has given rise to a literature *per se*, and has led to the adoption of the most daring opinions in regard to the authorship of a great portion of the Old Testament. The subject, therefore, is too important to be passed over in silence—although I fear the consideration of it may not prove altogether interesting to the general reader—I will, however, endeavour to be as clear and as brief with my remarks as the subject will admit of.

In order to make the new theory set up by the *modern school of criticism* intelligible to those of my readers who are not acquainted with Hebrew, it is necessary to remark at the outset that in the Old Testament the Deity is spoken of under *different titles* which are not so apparent in a translation. Thus we have the name *Elohim* rendered always in our version "God"; *Jehovah* rendered "LORD," printed in capital letters; *Adonai* also rendered by "Lord," but in order to distinguish it from the former it is not printed in capitals. Then again, the two first names often occur together as *Jehovah Elohim* rendered in our version "LORD GOD." Of these titles, *Elohim* and *Jehovah* are by far of most frequent occurrence.

Now, we venture to say, that millions of attentive Bible readers have never dreamed of any difficulty lurking behind *the use* of the different titles, no more than they would have suspected any peculiarity in reading a secular history in the author applying different titles to a person. Not so, however, with a host of our modern critics, they discover in the use of the different names of the Deity, *different hands of authorship*, and classify the portions into *Elohistic documents* and *Jehovistic documents*.

The employment of the different Divine names in Genesis did not escape the notice of some of the early Fathers of the Christian Church. Tertullian, who flourished in the second century of the Christian era, made reference to it in his treatise

against Hermogenes (Tom. II., p. 61). In the fourth century Chrysostom drew attention to it in his 14th Homily on Genesis. (Tom. II., p. 119). Tertullian thinks the different names were used designedly, whilst Chrysostom regards the names Elohim and Jehovah as apparently of the same meaning, and used indifferently without any design.

Many of the most celebrated Jewish writers have likewise more or less treated on the distinction of the terms employed by Moses to designate the Deity. Rabbi Judah Hallevi, in the twelfth century, in his work *COSRI*, treats at some length on the designations Elohim and Jehovah. The renowned Rabbi Maimonides, also, in his philosophical work, *MORE HANNEVOCHIM*, (*Guide of the Erring*), notices the use of the different terms employed by Moses in designating the Deity. And so likewise other writers in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. None of the eminent Hebrew scholars and profound critics, however, discovered any difficulty in the use of the term *Elohim* in some portions of the Scripture, and that of *Jehovah* in others. They very justly concluded that Moses was guided in the employment of the different terms by their respective *signification*, which would render the use of the term *Elohim* more suitable in some places, whilst the more sacred name *Jehovah* would be more fitly employed in others. The *signification*, unquestionably, as we shall hereafter show, furnishes the true reason for the varied use of the Divine names, in many portions at least, though in some portions it may not be quite so apparent.

The theory of *two distinct authors being engaged in the composition of Genesis* is altogether of modern origin. Up to the eighteenth century, we can positively assert, it was not even being hinted at by any Jewish or Christian writer, and the reader will be somewhat amazed when he is told, that this theory, which has shaken Germany to its very centre, and has been productive of so much mischief in other countries, was first promulgated by a French physician named Astruc in his work entitled "*Conjectures sur les Mémoires originaux du Livre de la Genèse*," published at Paris, 1753. In this work he maintains that one of the writers always employs *Elohim*, and never *Jehovah*, whilst the other employs *Jehovah*, though not altogether to the exclusion of *Elohim*. He further asserts that there are traces of no less than ten different memoirs which Moses made use of in compiling the book of Genesis. He altogether denies its Divine authority, and considers the book to be disfigured by useless repetitions, disorder, and contradictions.

When Astruc first sprung this theory upon the world, it attracted but little or no attention. It was probably thought,

that he was more capable of forming a correct *diagnosis* of a disease than of a Biblical subject. Rationalism, too, was yet in embryo in Germany, so that the ground was not yet prepared even for the taking of root much less for the flourishing of such a poisonous weed. For nearly fifty years the theory was buried in oblivion when about the end of the last century, *Eichhorn again brought it forward in his "Introduction to the Old Testament," with quite different results. Eichhorn was then Professor of Oriental Literature in the University of Göttingen, he was one of the most eminent scholars of Germany, a man of varied knowledge, but especially distinguished as an Oriental scholar and Biblical critic. The theory in the hands of such a man would naturally be more profoundly handled, whilst his opinion could not fail to command respect. Hence, as †Hengstenberg observed, "it met with general acceptance, and spread with amazing rapidity, so that only a few eminent scholars remained, who refused to do it homage." (Hengstenberg, vol. i. 221.)

Eichhorn, however, greatly modified the theory of Astruc, by rejecting the hypothesis of Moses having employed *ten memoirs* in the compilation of the Pentateuch, and concentrated all his

*Johann Gottfried Eichhorn was born at Dörnzimmern, in the Principality of Hohenlohe, Oehringen, in 1752, and received his education at Göttingen. He was a voluminous writer. His works on Biblical subjects are: *Universal Library of Biblical Literature*, 10 vols., Leipzig. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 5 vols., Göttingen. *Introduction to the Apocryphal writings of the Old Testament*. *Primitive History*, 2 vols. This work is conspicuous for its bold criticism of the Pentateuch. Eichhorn died in 1827, being then 75 years old, and still holding his Professorship.

†Ernest Wilhelm Hengstenberg was born at Fröndenberg, in Westphalia, in 1802. He was the son of a clergyman, who gave him his preliminary education before entering the University of Bonn, where he devoted himself chiefly to the Oriental and philosophical studies. Whilst at this University he was rather sympathizing with the rationalistic movement, but after having pursued his studies further at Basel, to which city he had removed, he ever afterwards became a devoted defender of the authenticity of the Scriptures. Hengstenberg had hard battles to fight, such men as Ilgen, Vater, Stähelin, Hartmann, Von Bohlen, Gesenius, Ewald, De Wette, Wegscheider, and a host of other eminent men belonging to the rationalistic school were no insignificant opponents. But he fought well and bravely, both as editor of the "Evangelistic Kirchenzeitung," and as author of several highly learned works on Biblical criticism; and although he may not have been successful in convincing many confirmed sceptics and rationalists of the unsoundness of their position, yet there is no doubt that his sound arguments carried conviction to the heart of many who had already begun to be harassed with doubts, whilst they strengthened others in their belief in the authenticity of Holy Writ.

The writings of Hengstenberg display great research, deep study, a sound judgment, and a kindly feeling towards his opponents. It affords me great gratification to have an opportunity to pay this humble tribute to the MEMORY of this truly good and learned writer; of whom it may well be said: "Well done, faithful servant." His principal works are: *Christologie des Alten Testaments*; *Beiträge zur Einleitung in A. T.*; *Commentar über den Psalmen*; *Die Geschichte Bileams und seiner Weissagung*; *Das Hohelied Solomonis Ausgelegt*. *Egypt and the Book of Moses*, and some other works.

efforts upon *the two distinct document theory*, by endeavouring to show, that, besides these documents being respectively characterized by the use of the names Jehovah and Elohim, they each possessed also a peculiar phraseology and peculiar ideas. He gives Moses indeed credit for having compiled the books that bear his name partly from these two documents, and any portion not so derived, to have been written by himself, but he denies, like the physician Astruc, that Moses was inspired.

Every-day experience abundantly demonstrates that when persons are become fascinated with some pet theory, there is often no limit to the extravagant fancies they will indulge in, and probably there could not be found a more striking example of this, than that which is furnished by this very document theory; reason and sound judgment seem all of a sudden to have left the modern critics, and the wildest and most extravagant views greedily laid hold of. In order to give the reader some idea of the absurd notions entertained by our modern critics, we will adduce the opinions of a few of the principal writers on this subject.

*De Wette, in his "Critical and Historical Introduction to the Old Testament," speaks of the sources which the author of the Pentateuch made use of as follows :

"It is incontestable that the Elohistie author had access to the most ancient sources. But the uniformity of his style does not allow us to suppose that he inserted the original documents touching the Mosaic history strictly and without alteration. If such documents were in his hands, he worked them over new. Besides, he may have drawn from tradition, for he lived about four hundred years after Moses, and one thousand after Abraham."

*De Wette was born 14th January, 1780, at Ulla, near Weimar, and studied at the University of Jena. He was appointed Professor of Philosophy, at Heidelberg, in 1807; and two years afterwards Professor of Theology. In 1810 he removed to Berlin, being appointed to a chair in the University of that city. He was very popular, and soon made himself a name also as a critic. In 1819 he was deprived of his chair on account of a letter of condolence which he wrote to the mother of the assassin of the great German dramatist Kotzebue. Soon afterwards, however, he obtained the Professorship of Theology in the University of Basel. Here also his lectures and sermons gained him great popularity, and the grand council of the city showed the esteem in which they held him by making him a member of the Council of Education, and by granting him the freedom of the city in 1829. A still greater honor was conferred on him in 1849, when he was created rector of the University, an honor which he, however, did not long enjoy, for he died in the same year. DeWette was a voluminous writer, and some of his works are translated into English. His principal works are: *Contributions to an Introduction to the O. T.* 2 vols. Halle—*A Commentary on the Psalms*; *A Critical and Historical Introduction to the Canonical Scriptures of the O. T.* 2 vols. *Christian Ethics*; *Compendium of Christian Dogmatics*; *The Essence of Christian Faith*, &c.

"The Jehovistic author refers to Mosaic documents:" Exod. xvii. 14. "Jehovah said unto Moses, *write this for a memorial in a book*, repeat it in the ears of Joshua." "Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah:" ch. xxiv. 4. But the legal passage, Ex. xxi-xxiii., which he probably would give us as Mosaic, may rather be ascribed to this author himself." There is no trace of ancient sources in his writings, except in Num. xxi." The reader will please specially to note this statement, as I purpose hereafter to show quite the contrary to be the case. De Wette goes on to say: "The author of Deuteronomy, as it appears, would have us regard his whole book as the work of Moses; so he makes Moses speak of "the Book," (xvii. 18, 19; xxviii. 58, 61; xxix. 20, 21, 27.) But the obscurity and unfit-ness of these claims deprive them of all value as proofs. He derived his *historical* statements entirely from the institutions prevalent at his time. Besides, he treated both with great freedom." (Vol. 2 p. 159, sec. 162.)

As extravagant as the opinions above set forth are, they are even surpassed in wild conjecture by those entertained by the celebrated Oriental scholar, Ewald. He holds, that besides the Book of Jasher mentioned, Josh. x. 13, and the Book of the Wars of the LORD spoken of, Num. xxi. 14; there existed also a book of the victory over the Amalekites, (Exod. xvii. 4,) a book of Covenants, and a life of Moses, and that from these books the Elohist author composed a *Book of Origins*. At a later period a Jehovistic writer compiled an early history of the Hebrews for the Ten Tribes, whilst another Jehovistic writer, compiled a similar history for the Kingdom of Judah, and that these three books were afterwards combined into one by some pious Hebrew who lived in Uzziah's or Jotham's reign. Such was, according to Ewald,* the origin of the first four Books of Moses, and the Book of Joshua. As for the

*Heinrich Ewald was born November, 1803, at Göttingen, and is regarded as one of the greatest Orientalists of this century. He studied at the university of his native town, and from his early youth, displayed great fondness for Oriental literature. Whilst yet a student, he wrote a work on the "Composition of Genesis." In 1823 he commenced his labours as a teacher at the Wolfenbüttel Gymnasium, but in 1827 he was, by his own university, called to the chair of philosophy, which he, however, exchanged in 1835, for that of Oriental literature. After the death of Eichborn the important department of critical exegesis of the Old Testament was also added to his chair. Ewald is a voluminous writer. His principal works are, *A Critical Grammar of the Hebrew Language*, *The Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, *The Prophets of the Old Testament*, *A Work on the Canticles*, *A Work on the History of the People of Israel to the Time of Christ*, (4 vol.,) and a subsidiary volume on the *Antiquities of the People of Israel*, *History of Christ and His Time*, *History of the Apostolic Age*, and some other works on ancient literature. Ewald was very opinionative, and the literary warfare carried on between him and Gesenius was not in such a friendly spirit as might be expected from two eminent scholars. It is not easy to say to what party Ewald belonged, for he at times denounces the Lutherans, and at others, the Catholics, and sometimes even the Rationalists.

Book of Deuteronomy, according to this learned Professor, it was only ushered into existence a hundred years later by an Israelite refugee in Egypt.

A poet has indeed well said :

“ Error is a hardy plant ; it flourishes in every soil :
In the heart of the wise and good, alike with the foolist, and wicked.”

But when he goes on to say :

“ For there is no error so crooked, but it has some lines of truth.”

we can safely bring forward Ewald's theory of the origin of the Pentateuch as a proof of the fallacy of the poet's assumption, for we can confidently assert there is not a single line of truth in his whole statement. It has, even by rationalists themselves, been stigmatized as a “ tissue of arbitrary fictions.”

Such is the teaching concerning the origin of the five books of Moses that has been, and still is, emanating from the principal universities of Germany ; and how can it be otherwise but that infidelity, scepticism, and rationalism should be so prevalent in that country, when some of its most eminent scholars vie with one another as to who can deal the most destructive blow at the authenticity of the Scriptures. I say of the Scriptures, for the Pentateuch is the foundation of the Bible, and with it, it must stand or fall.

From Germany this *precious* theory was soon transplanted into England by writers of that country, who had either studied in Germany—evil communications corrupt good manners—or had become fascinated with the theory by the deceptive arguments of German critics. The theory in its English garb presents, however, the same appearance : there is no mistaking it, for the English writers merely adopted either one or the other modified form. The late Bishop Colenso, for example, was satisfied with the more moderate theory of Eichhorn, of only *two distinct documents*, whilst Dr. Davidson apparently adopted the theory of Professor Hupfeld, of Halle, which ascribes the origin of the Pentateuch to no less than five sources. These sources he enumerates as follows :

1st. The primitive Elohist who wrote after the Canaanites had been driven out of Palestine. His person must always remain unknown ; it is probable that he lived in the tribe of Judah, and that he was a Levite. He formed the ground work of the narrative from ancient documents and traditions.

2nd. The Jehovist who was posterior to the Elohist, and is set down as having written in the first half of the eighth century B. C., he also incorporated fragments more or less into his own documents, though tradition was the principal source.

3rd. The junior Elohists, who is supposed to have lived in the time of Elisha (about 880 B. C.), who also compiled from existing documents a narrative, which in many particulars bears an analogy to the Elohists, but in still more to the Jehovist.

4th. The Redactor, who lived still later, and who bound together the three documents, and in performing this work "acted with considerable independence, adding occasionally a connecting link, omitting what seemed to stand in the way of connection, abridging in different modes, and transposing pieces according to his own way."

5th. The Deuteronomist who wrote the book of Deuteronomy during the second half of Manasseh's reign about 650 B. C. (See Dr. Samuel Davidson's Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 47 to 51, and pp. 120, 183.)

No doubt my readers will be astounded at reading the above account of the origin of the Pentateuch which they have been accustomed to reverence as containing the inspired word of God, but which they are now told is the work of no less than five persons whose names are not even known, and the time of their writing altogether uncertain.

But in order that the reader may see what absurdities this theory will give rise to, we will give here Gen. xxv., being one of the chapters given in Dr. Davidson's "Introduction," pp. 58, 59, and portioned out as follows:

To the *Elohists* are assigned verses 7 to 11 to the word בְּנֵי (beno) his son, included, verses 17, 20, 26, from the word וַיִּצְחָק.

To the *younger Elohists* is ascribed verses 11 from the word וַיִּשָּׁב to the end of the verse.

To the *Jehovist* are allotted, verses 1 to 6, 12 to 16, 18, 19, 21 to 26, to the word וַיַּעֲקֹב.

To the *Redactor* are ascribed verse 26, the names in the *Elohists* left out, and verses 26 to 34.

Here, then, we not only have a plain historical chapter portioned out to five different authors, but even some of the verses are cut in two, and the parts assigned to different sources.

The 11th verse is divided as follows: "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac"; this is ascribed to the *Primitive Elohists*, whilst the remaining portion, "and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi," is assigned to the *Junior Elohists*. Now what possible reason can there be advanced for supposing that this verse is the work of two distinct writers separated from one another by several centuries. Surely there is nothing peculiar in the language employed in the original that would in the least favour such a supposition, and there is certainly nothing in the sense, for the two

parts harmonize perfectly one with another. The narrative, having first stated that the blessing of God after the death of Abraham descended on Isaac being heir to the promise, goes on to say: "And Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi," that is, he continued to dwell in that place where he had before taken up his abode.

Verse 26 is cut in two in a similar manner, as follows: "And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob"; this part is ascribed to the *Jehovist*, whilst the remaining part of the verse, "And Isaac was sixty years old when they were born," is assigned to the *Elohist*. Here again we would in vain search for any peculiarity either in the language or in the sense that would indicate a twofold authorship. It surely cannot be regarded as anything remarkable in the narrative giving the age of Isaac when his two sons were born; and as regards the language itself employed in the verse in the original, the most fastidious critic could not possibly detect the slightest peculiarity that would indicate it to be derived from two distinct sources. Even the use of the different appellations of the Deity cannot be brought forward as an argument for dividing those two verses, for neither of the names of the Deity happen to occur in them. And in a similar manner many other chapters and verses are dealt with, they are mercilessly cut up just according to the fancy of this or that critic, and this work of destruction is called *higher criticism*.

And yet, it is quite evident from the multifarious views entertained by the modern critics themselves in respect to the *document theory*, that they in reality had no sound basis upon which such a theory could be constructed. Mr. Rawlinson has very justly remarked, in his "Bampton Lectures," (p. 47), "Having to assign a time for the introduction of the forged volume (the Pentateuch), they have varied as to the date, which they suggest, by about a thousand years, while they differ also from one another in every detail with which they venture to clothe the transaction."

In order to show the reader what *shifting sand* this modern *document theory* is built upon, we will just adduce a few examples out of the many which we have at hand.

Bishop Colenso, who, as we have stated, adopted the views of one class of German critics, refers (Part ii., p. 176) to three instances in which the differences in style and language clearly indicate two different writers.

In the first place, "the Elohist," he observes, "uses the expression אֵל שַׁדַּי (*El Shaddai*), GOD ALMIGHTY, Gen. xvii. 1; xxviii. 3; xxxv. 11; xliii. 14; xlviii. 3, and xlix. 25; which the Jehovist never employs." In the last quotation the Bishop

has evidently mistaken the reading, for it is *וְאֵת שַׁדַּי* (*weëth Shaddai*) "and the Almighty." The reader will please to notice the positive expression "never."

Now if we turn to "the Table of the Elohistic and Jehovistic sections," as given in Dr. Davidson's "Introduction," (p. 59), we find two of the above passages actually assigned to the Jehovist, namely, xliii. 14; and xlix. 25. Let it be remembered that Dr. Davidson represents the views of another set of German critics.

In the second place, "the Elohist," observes Colenso, "uses *Israel* as a personal name for Jacob, xxxv. 21, 22; xxxvii. 3, 13; xliii. 6, 8, 11; xlv. 28; xlv. 1, 2, 29, 30; xlvii. 29, 31; xlviii. 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 21; xlix. 2; l. 2, the Jehovist never."

If we again turn to Dr. Davidson's "Table," we find out of the twenty-three passages here cited *only seven* ascribed to the Elohist, the others to the Jehovist and the Redactor. Here again we have one set of critics controverting the theory of another set.

In the third place, it is urged that "the Elohist always designates Mesopotamia as *Padan*, or *Padan-aram*, and the Jehovist as *Aram-naharaim*."

The objection is founded on the supposition, that these are two different names of one region, where, in reality, according to the best authorities, they are names of different districts of Mesopotamia. The etymological meaning of the names itself indicates that such is the case. *Aram-naharaim*, denotes *Syria of the Two Rivers*, i. e., Mesopotamia. The two rivers which enclose Mesopotamia are, the Euphrates and the Tigris. It is, however, very uncertain whether *Aram-naharaim* embraced the whole of that tract of country, or only the northern portion of it. *Padan-aram*, denotes the *Plain of Syria*, and according to an Assyrian inscription lately discovered, *Padan-aram* was situated on the *opposite* side of the Euphrates to *Aram-naharaim*.

The utter uncertainty that prevails in the ranks of the modern critics in regard to the age and authorship of the Pentateuch in itself is quite sufficient to show that no confidence can be placed in their theories, and should make persons pause before they embark in a vessel so mercilessly tossed upon the ever changing waves of doubt, with no safe haven, far or near. Indeed, the more closely we look into the various arguments put forward against the authenticity of the Pentateuch the more glaring becomes the fallacy of their reasoning.

We have shown to what absurdities the *document theory* leads to in cutting up chapters and even verses, and represents that centuries intervened between the compositions of the different portions. We will now proceed to examine the foundation itself upon which the theory is constructed.

The principal argument brought forward in support of the *document theory* is, the use of the different appellations of the Deity. Now, after all, what is there so very remarkable in all this that our modern critics should lay so much stress upon it. Do we not constantly find modern writers, in speaking of persons having several titles, sometimes use one title and sometimes another? Supposing the reader were to find in a history or biography of a nobleman who had filled the office of a governor general or viceroy being sometimes spoken of by *earl*, and sometimes by *lord*, and again, sometimes by *viceroy* or *governor general*, would the thought ever enter into his mind that the book on that account must have been written by different persons? Surely not? Why then should not the same liberty be extended to the sacred writers which is so freely accorded to a secular author? But whilst secular writers are altogether at liberty in employing the various titles according to their own fancies, the sacred historian, on the contrary, was frequently restricted in his use of *one* or the *other*, as will plainly appear from the following remarks, to which I would now direct the readers particular attention.

The Hebrew appellations of the Deity are expressive of the different attributes of the Deity, and accordingly the sacred writer would naturally be guided, in many instances, if not in all cases, in his choice by the context, using the one which is most suitable to the passage. Thus the term אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) expresses the attribute of *might, power*,* and hence we find the sacred writer having very appropriately used this appellation altogether throughout Gen. 1, as in the creation the mighty power of God is pre-eminently displayed; and on referring to other passages in which *Elohim* is employed it will be found that it is chiefly where the plenitude of God's power is set forth. It is, however, necessary to observe, in order to show the marked difference between the use of *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, that the former is sometimes used in reference to *false gods* as אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם (*Elohe mitsrayim*) "the gods of the Egyptians," Exod. xiii. 12, and so in other places, but *Jehovah* is only used in reference to the true God. Further, *Elohim* is employed in reference to angels, as Ps. viii. 6; at least it has been so ren-

*According to many Hebrew critics, and among them Gesenius and Delitzsch, the appellation אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) is derived from the root אָזַל (*ul*) to be strong, mighty, and hence denotes the *Mighty Being*. Some other Hebrew scholars prefer to derive it from the root אָלַח (*alah*), to worship God, to be seized with fear. There exists at present no such root in Hebrew, but it is still in use in Arabic, from which it may be inferred that it was formerly also in use in Hebrew, and has become obsolete like many other words. According to the latter derivation, it denotes the BEING whom men worship and regard with reverential fear, as performing wonderful and mighty deeds. It is, therefore, immaterial from which of the two roots *Elohim* is derived. It is generally allowed that the name denotes *strength* or *power*.

dered in that place by many ancient and modern interpreters. Again, *Elohim* apparently is sometimes applied to *judges*, as Exod. xxi. 6, xxii. 7, (Eng. vers. v. 8), and is so rendered in the Chaldee version, the English version, and by almost all interpreters. Michaelis endeavours to account for *Elohim* obtaining this signification by supposing that the Hebrews revered the judges like gods in the same manner as the Egyptians did. But this is merely a conjecture, for which there is not the least authority. The learned Rabbi Abarbanel supposed that the judges were sometimes called *Elohim*, because they administered justice in *holy places*, where God was enthroned. But the judges did not always perform the duties of their office in sacred places, but sometimes in the gates of the city. See Job v. 4; Deut. xxi, 19; Prov. xxi. 21. It is, therefore, more likely that they were called *Elohim* because their judgments were delivered in the name of God.

The name אֲדֹנָי* (*Adonai*) *Lord*, expresses the attribute of *rule and government*, as being the Ruler and Governor of the universe.

The sacred name יְהוָה (*Jehovah*) *Jehovah* expresses the attribute of *self-existence*, and presents God to us as the *Immutable, Eternal Being*. The name is unquestionably derived from the verb הָיָה† (*hawa*) a more ancient form of הוּיָה (*hayah*) i.e., *to be or exist*, hence He who is or subsists. In giving this etymological origin of the Divine name, we are not left to mere conjecture, but the Word of God itself furnishes an unerring guide. When Moses was about to be sent as a messenger from God to the enslaved Israelites, he asks: "If they say unto me, What is His name? What shall I say unto them? And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM, and he said, Thus thou shalt say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me to you." Exod. iii. 13, 14.) It is, the Eternal Being without beginning or end has sent me. Some writers, and among them Rabbi Bechai, Leusden, Grotius, Galatinus, have regarded the sacred name יְהוָה (*Jehovah*) to be composed of the preterite הָיָה (*hawah*) *he was*, the participle הוּיָה (*howeh*) *being*, and the future יִהְיֶה (*yahweh*) *he will be*.

According to the Jewish tradition, the sacred name *Jehovah* could only be pronounced once a year by the High Priest, on the day of atonement, when he entered the Holy of Holies to make expiation for the sins of the people, and accordingly the Jews at the present day regard the name too sacred to pronounce it, but always substitute אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*) *Lord* for it, even in read-

* From the root דָּן (*dun*) to judge, to rule.

† The form הָיָה (*hawah*) is still the common form in Chaldee and Syriac, and there exist yet traces of it in Hebrew; see Gen. xxvii. 29, Job xxxvii. 6.

ing the Scriptures, or in their most solemn prayers. According to Philo, those only whose ears and tongues were purged by wisdom was it lawful to hear and utter this awful name, (see Vit. Mos. iii., p. 519). Josephus, too, says: "Whereupon God declared to him (*Moses*) his holy name, which had never been discovered to men before; concerning which it is not lawful for me to say more," (Ant. ii. ch. xii sec. 4). And again (book iii. ch. v. sec. 4), he says that Moses wrote the Ten Commandments on two tables; "which it is not lawful for us to set down directly, but their import we will declare." According to Maimonides, one of the greatest Rabbinical writers," after the death of Simon the Just, the name אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*) was substituted even in the temple instead of יְהוָה (*Jehovah*). The Samaritans in reading the Pentateuch always used *Shima*, i. e., "the name" instead of it, and in the Rabbinical writings, it is always spoken of as *the name*, *the name of four letters*, or *the great or terrible name*. Upon tablets found at Palmyra some of the inscriptions read: "To the blessed Name, reverence for ever."

The tradition in respect to the pronounciation of the sacred name is founded on Lev. xxiv. 16, "And he that curses the name of the LORD, shall surely be put to death." Most Jewish writers have taken the verb נָקַב (*noker*) in the passage in the sense to *name* or *pronounce*, and so indeed, it is rendered also in the Septuagint, ἐπονυμίαςας . . . τὸ ὄνομα *. But the verb is evidently used there in the sense to curse or blaspheme, and so it is rendered in the Vulgate, and by most of the modern commentators.

Whilst the sacred writers, therefore, employ the name *Elohim* in passages where the *power* of God is set forth, they, on the contrary, employ the holy and immutable name *Jehovah* in connection with religious rites and solemn subjects in general. When the sacred writers speak of the only true God, they employ *Jehovah*, and He also is the only object of true

*In the Hindoo sacred books much has been borrowed from the Scriptures, and it is by no means unlikely that they adopted or imitated also some of the customs of the ancient Hebrews. The Hindoo Mystics profess to have a monosyllable O' M, which is of very profound import, and so sacred that it cannot be guiltlessly pronounced even by a priest. It must be contemplated and recited mentally. It is supposed to be a name or emblem of the Deity. This awful syllable is composed of the three Sanscrit letters A U M, but in composition the A and U are made to coalesce in O. The first letter is supposed to be symbolical of *Brahma*, the creative power, the second of *Vishnu*, the preserver, and the third of *Siva*, the destroyer or renovator, for the Hindoo philosophers maintain that destruction is only production in another form. The great importance of this monosyllable is fully set forth in the institutes of Manu. One of the directions given is as follows: "A Brahman beginning a lecture must always pronounce to himself the syllable O' M, for unless he does so, his learning will slip away from him, and unless it follows, nothing will be long retained." (Ch. ii. 74.)

worship. To Jehovah alone are sacrifices offered, and the Israelites were commanded to keep the laws of Jehovah. Thus too, we have the phrases, "to serve *Jehovah*," "the congregation of *Jehovah*." Again the Israelites are the people of *Jehovah*, and their King is spoken of as the anointed of *Jehovah*, &c. There can, therefore, be no doubt that the sacred writers were guided, in a great measure, in the employment of the Divine names by their signification, selecting the one which they considered as most suitable to the connection in which it was to be used. It is not our intention to take up space here by quoting a number of passages in support of the foregoing statement, as we can illustrate the use of the Divine names with greater clearness as we go on with our interpretation, but we may briefly refer here to the occurrence of these names in the three first chapters of Genesis to show that there is a peculiar appropriateness and significance in the manner the sacred writer has employed them.

We have already stated inasmuch as *Elohim* expresses the attribute of might, and thus presents God to us in the fulness of His power, hence that Divine name is employed throughout the first chapter in connection with the creating and perfecting of everything by the fiat of the ALMIGHTY BEING. Man was created in the image of (*Elohim*) God (v. 26), he could not have been created in the image of *Jehovah* for that holy name, as we have seen denotes the self-existent eternal God, and exclusively belongs to Him. In the three first verses of the second chapter, we have a brief summing up of the creation, and hence we find in verse 3, still *Elohim* employed: "And (*Elohim*) God blessed the seventh day." In verse 4, however, the sacred writer introduces the Divine names יהוה אלהים (*Jehovah Elohim*) "LORD God" together, and these names are so used throughout the chapter. Now, why is this? Our rationalistic writers would answer, "because this portion was written by a different writer and at a different period," but we say because the subject requires it. The sacred narrative enters now on the most momentous and most solemn theme recorded in the Old Testament, namely, the planting of the garden of Eden as the happy abode of the parents of the human family, indicating the great love and care of God for the beings He had created; the FALL OF MAN, and the consequent miseries entailed upon the human family and the world at large; and the promise of a future restoration at the coming of the Messiah. No wonder, then, that the sacred writer should have employed the most holy and most exalted name of all the Divine names in connection with a theme of such a solemn nature. But it may be asked, why employ both Divine names together? To this we may

reply, that the sacred writer evidently did this to show that JEHOVAH is the ELOHIM, the Creator of the world, not a different BEING, but only expressive of a different attribute. Had the sacred writer employed JEHOVAH for the first time by itself, there might have been a doubt as to whether JEHOVAH did not designate a different BEING to that denoted by ELOHIM, and it was to guard against such a misapprehension or misapplication that Moses used both names together. Who can tell what theories modern critics would have founded upon it had the name *Jehovah* been used alone? As it is, some are insisting upon an Egyptian or Chinese origin.

We would now draw the reader's particular attention to the manner in which the Divine names are employed in the beginning of chapter iii. In the first part of the first verse, where the sacred writer continues the narrative setting forth that "the serpent was more subtle than all the beasts which (*Jehovah Elohim*) the LORD God had made," he still continues to employ the two names together, but not so in the second part of the verse, when the serpent commences his seductive address, "And he said unto the woman: Is it even so that (*Elohim*) God said ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden"? Here the reader will perceive "*Elohim*" is only used, the serpent dare not make use of the sacred name JEHOVAH; nay more, he dare not even hear the holy name; hence, throughout the conversation with the serpent the woman only employs (*Elohim*) "God." When we come to verse 8, however, where the sacred writer speaks of "the voice of (*Jehovah Elohim*) Lord God resounding (not "walking," as in the English Version), both names again are employed together, and so throughout the remainder of the chapter.

The identity of *Jehovah* and *Elohim* having now been fully established, Moses after this discontinued to use both names together, and employs either one or the other as most suitable to the context. Only once more throughout the whole of the Pentateuch do we find the two names employed together, and that is, Exod. ix. 30, where Moses seems to have used them together in order to impress upon Pharaoh that *Jehovah* and *Elohim* are names of one God, and not of two different Beings, as the king apparently had supposed. In verse 28, Pharaoh says: "Intreat (*Jehovah*) the LORD, for it is enough that there be no more (*koloth Elohim*) voices of God (*i. e.*, thunder), and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." It will be seen, that Pharaoh asked Moses to entreat *Jehovah* namely, the God whose messenger he said he was, but he speaks of the thunder as the "voices of *Elohim*," not that of *Jehovah*, but of some deity. So also the magicians when they were unable to produce "gnats" by means of their

hidden arts, said it is the "finger of (*Elohim*) God," as much as to say it was not Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, who inflicted this plague, but one of the deities.

Now let the reader mark the reply which Moses gives to Pharaoh's request to pray to the LORD that the thunder and hail might cease: "And Moses said to him, when I am gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands unto the LORD and the voices (*i. e.*, the thunder,) shall cease, and there shall be no more hail, that thou mayest know that the earth is the LORD's. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye do not yet fear (*Jehovah Elohim*) the LORD God." As much as to say: ye do not fear *Jehovah* who is *Elohim* the only true God, to whom alone worship and honour is due. (Compare 2 Sam. vii. 22). The reader will now perceive that here also the use of *Jehovah Elohim* can be satisfactorily accounted for.

We repeat, then, that there can be no doubt that Moses was guided in the use of the Divine names by their *meaning*, as he regarded one more appropriate than the other to the context, though we may possibly not now in every instance be able to assign a conclusive reason.

But there is yet another important circumstance which must be noticed in connection with the use of the Divine names, and which will at once account for why *Elohim* is employed in many places and not *Jehovah*. The form of the sacred name יהוה *Jehovah* is *immutable*, under no circumstance is it allowed to be altered. Hence it cannot be used with the *genitive** (*construct*) for that would necessitate a change of the final letter ה (*he*); neither can it be used with a *possessive pronoun*, for these are suffixed to the noun in Hebrew, and would also necessitate a change in the final letter, for such phrases, therefore, as *God of Israel, my God, our God, &c.*, Moses had no alternative but to use *Elohim*.

We may now dismiss this subject, which has already taken up a great deal of space. The few passages we have been examining ought, we think, to be sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind that the use of the Divine names by the sacred writer admits of a more reasonable and satisfactory solution than that which is afforded by the *document theory* of our modern critics which ascribes parts of chapters and even parts of verses to different authorships, and supposes them to have been written at long intervals of time from one another. It is, indeed, marvellous that such an extraordinary theory should have met with so much favour among the most highly educated in Europe. But, as we have already said, prejudice is a powerful agent in shaping our opinions.

* The expression יהוה צבאות (*LORD of Hosts*) Gesenius justly maintains to be elliptical for יהוה אלהי צבאות (*Jehovah God of Hosts*) as Jer. v. 14. Amos iv. 14.

But, we may well ask, where was the necessity to have recourse to such an extreme theory which at once strips the whole Pentateuch of its genuineness, and represents the sacred writers who mentioned Moses as the author of it as altogether mistaken in doing so. If, indeed, the peculiar manner in which the Divine names are used in the Book of Genesis necessarily implies different authorship, why not suppose that Moses may have availed himself to a certain extent of some *older documents*? We have already remarked, p. 28, that Moses, in giving the multifarious and complicated ages of the antediluvians, may have drawn some of his information from existing genealogical records. To such a limited use of existing documents few, I think, would seriously object, for it would in no way detract from the authenticity of the Pentateuch, since, as an inspired writer, he was under the guidance of the Spirit of God, under whose infallible direction he was preserved from making use of any erroneous statements that may have existed in the documents which he consulted. The reader will, therefore, not be surprised when I tell him that many eminent and devout writers, whom no one would for a moment suspect of being tainted with heterodoxy, have espoused the view that the Book of Genesis "may be based on documents *contemporary*, or nearly contemporary, with many of the events narrated. Documents from the hand of Abraham, from the hand of even some "man of God," who lived before the flood, may have been before Moses, and been embodied by him in the volume he wrote. (See Rev. W. Wilkes's Reply to Bishop Colenso, p. 119). Vitringa, the eminent Oriental scholar and commentator, many years before the document controversy had been thought of, expressed the opinion that the patriarchs had no doubt committed to writing the principal facts of the early history of the world, and that "Moses collected, arranged, embellished, and (where necessary) completed ancient memoirs and records." (Obs. Sac. i., c. 4, p. 36).

Calmet, the learned Benedictine monk, whose exegetical writings have been held in high esteem both by Roman Catholics and Protestants, and who is so widely known from his Historical and Critical Dictionary of the Bible, expressed similar views to those of Vitringa.* (Comm. Lit., Tom. i., p. 13.) Bishop Cleig, too, in his edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible (vol. 1, p. 21), and Horne (Introd. 1, p. 52) speak approvingly of the hypothesis of Vitringa and Calmet. We might go on mentioning many more highly esteemed writers who adopted

* Campegius Vitringa was born at Leuwarden, in Friesland, 16th May, 1659, and died March 21st, 1722. He studied at the universities of Franeker and Leyden. In 1681 he was appointed Professor of Oriental Literature, and afterwards he occupied the chair of Theology. He left a number of excellent and erudite works, most of them commentaries, which are constantly quoted.

the same opinion, but we shall only quote the very sensible remarks on this subject of the Rev. J. Ayre, in his recent edition of the second volume of "Horne's Introduction," (pp 587, 588.) "It is very possible that a student, after diligent research, may be persuaded that he sees traces of more than one hand in the Pentateuch. The question is confessedly intricate. And if the varied use of the Divine name, and any perceptible difference of action, incline the mind to the conclusion that the most reasonable mode of accounting for the phenomena is to believe that previous documents were worked up into the composition as we have it, the present writer is far from censuring such a conclusion. This is nothing more than what we have a thousand examples of. * * Secular writers have largely availed themselves of the labours of those who produced them, and historians especially have often literally transcribed into their narratives events related by older annalists. It is no charge against the author of the Pentateuch to suppose that he has done the same. It does not interfere with the belief in his inspiration, for inspired writers were to employ all diligence in acquiring information. The Divine superintendence guided their faculties, but did not supercede the exercise of them. It preserved them from erroneously using the knowledge they anywise acquired, so that what they have left on record is the very word of God."

"To the belief, then, in the existence of the so-called *Elohim* and *Jehovah* documents there is no theological objection. The question is not of vital interest. But it becomes of vital importance when men not only distinguish, but *set one against the other*, when they imagine contradictions, and argue that each author respectively described events, not as they occurred, but *according to his own fancy*, and the prevalent opinion of his times, and thus degrade the sacred book. * *

"It is here, then, that a stand must be made. The documents used—if separate documents there were—in the composition of the Pentateuch (and it is in Genesis chiefly that they would be used), were *in perfect harmony*. If information was found only in *one*, it was not denied, though not recorded, by the *other*. And the facts obtained from both were disposed with unerring faithfulness in the fittest place to make a **TEXT-BOOK OF HOLY TRUTH FOR GOD'S CHURCH FOR EVER.**"

To whatever extent, however, Moses may have availed himself of older documents in the composition of the Book of Genesis, we are convinced that in employing the Divine names, he was not influenced by any documents he may have consulted, but simply selected the one which he considered as most appropriate to the subject. The passages we have examined clearly show that there was a design in the manner

in which *Jehovah* and *Jehovah Elohim* are employed in those passages, and I hope as we proceed with our explanations, we shall be able to show that at least in most cases, if not in all, a sound reason may be assigned for their respective use.

5. *And no shrub of the field was yet on the earth, and no herb of the field did yet sprout forth: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground.*

This verse merely recapitulates that God called into existence every shrub and every herb before they existed upon the earth, and before any of those requirements existed which are indispensable to the ordinary mode of propagation and culture. They were called into existence in their full perfection before there had been any rain, and before man had been created. The whole vegetable kingdom is here spoken of under two grand divisions, namely, *שִׁיחַ* (*siäch*) *shrub*, which is here used in a more comprehensive sense as to include all hard-wooded plants, shrubs, and trees; and *עֵשֶׂב* (*esev*) which here embraces all other classes of vegetation.

6. *And a mist went up from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.*

The vegetation which had been called into existence was not allowed to languish for want of moisture, a mist went up from the earth which watered the whole surface of the ground, to refresh and to produce growth by natural means. The ascending of the mist, however, may set before us also another creative act of God, by which the wonderful formation of rain was established; for it is hardly reasonable to suppose that there was no rain upon the earth during the 1650 years that elapsed between the Creation and the Flood.

Elihu, in his sublime address, beautifully alludes to the wonderful display of God's power, as shown in the formation of rain:

For He (God) draweth up the waterdrops, (i. e., the mist or vapour which afterwards descends in rain.)

They trickle rain instead of His mist (i. e., the drops of water come down in rain instead of the mist from which they had been formed.)

Which the clouds drop down (i. e., the rain), and distil upon many men.
(Job xxxvi. 27, 28.)

Thomas Scott has beautifully paraphrased this passage:

"Refin'd by Him the wat'ry atoms rise,
Run into clouds, and flow along the skies:
And distilling in benignant rain
Swell the brown harvest of the shouting swain."

Rabbi Saadiah, who flourished in the early part of the tenth century, rendered the verse in his Arabic Version: "Nor had

a mist ascended from the earth." This rendering would form a continuation of the preceding verse, and imply, that not only had there as yet not been any rain, but not even a mist had gone up to produce vegetation. A similar rendering is given by Emmanuel Tremellius and Franciscus Janius, in their Latin translation, and has also been adopted by Bay, Boothroyd, and favoured by Bush, and other commentators. As the Hebrew *vav* (waw) conjunctive is in the English Version often rendered "nor," and in the German Version by "*noch*," (i. e., *nor*), when the preceding sentence is negative, as, for example, Exod. xx. 4: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor (Hebrew, *and*) any likeness." There can, therefore, be no objection to this rendering on philological grounds, and it certainly accords well with the context. Still, we think, the rendering, "and a mist went up," is here the correct one, for two reasons. In the first place, if the sacred writer had wished to convey the idea that *even no mist went up*, it would have been more suitably introduced immediately after the statement, "the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth," in the preceding verse. Secondly, as we have already stated, we consider the ascending of the mist as one of the creative acts of God, from which clouds were to be formed.

7. *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life; and man became a living being.*

In ch. i. 27, the creation of man had been only briefly alluded to, that "God created man in his *own* image"; this general statement might have given rise to misconception as to what extent man bears the image of God, the sacred writer, therefore, gives here a more detailed account of the creation of man, and mentions two distinct acts; first, the forming of the body "dust of the ground"; hence, so far as the body is concerned, it is merely dust; and therefore it is said, ch. iii. 19: "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." The other direct act is, the breathing into his nostrils the spirit of life, which is immediately followed by the words, "and man became a living being," thereby not only indicating that it was *the spirit of life* which animated the body, but also, that it has nothing in common with the body, the two being entirely distinct. Hence Solomon, in speaking of the extinction of human life, says: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccles. xii. 7.) It was not because man became "a *נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה* (*nephesh chayah*) living being" that he holds such a lofty position above all other created creatures upon earth, for this term is also applied to the smallest insect, but he holds

this distinguished position through *the means* by which he became "a living being," namely, "the נשמת חיים (*nishmath chaiyim*) spirit of life" which God breathed into his nostrils. This constitutes the whole greatness and superiority. This enables him to reason, to plan, to carry out, or to relinquish gigantic undertakings, and to discern between good and evil. And it was this that enabled the Psalmist to exclaim :

"And yet Thou causest him (i. e., man) to lack but a little from angels,
(i. e., Thou has made man but a little lower than the angels,) "
"And with honour and glory hast Thou crowned him."

We have already stated, that in order to bring the acts of God, and His dealings with man, more readily under the comprehension of human understanding, the sacred writers represent God as actually performing acts which are merely affected by His WILL. There is, therefore, no necessity of taking the phrase, "the Lord God formed* man," in a literal sense, that the Almighty actually formed a human figure from the dust, all that the language intends to convey is, that at the WILL of the Almighty *the dust was shaped into a human form*, and then He breathed into his nostrils "the spirit of life."

8. *And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden eastward ; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.*

9. *And the LORD God caused to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; and the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

Man, who had been created an immortal being, was also designed by his Maker to enjoy the most perfect peace and felicity. God, therefore, Himself, prepared an abode for him, which at once implies that it was in every way perfect for the enjoyment of undisturbed happiness. There was nothing wanting to gratify both the sight and taste. The Hebrew word גן (*gan*), *garden*, merely denotes an *enclosed, protected* place, there existed at that time no more suitable word in the

* The orthographical peculiarity of the verb וַיַּצַּר (*waiyitser*) and *he formed* occurring only in this place written in full with *two yods*, in connection with the formation of man, instead of with *one yod* וַיַּצַּר as in all other places, has attracted the attention of some of the Hebrew sages, who discovered a number of hidden meanings concealed in the *two yods*. Thus, for example, they are supposed to imply that man was formed for *this and the future world* ; that he combines in himself *the earthly and the heavenly*, &c. We, of course, have no sympathy with such mystical interpretations. There are a number of similar orthographical peculiarities to be met with in other verbs, which cannot be accounted for in any other way, than as being mistakes which originated through the carelessness of the transcribers. It is, however, a strange coincidence that this *full form* should just have occurred in connection with the formation of man. In verse nineteen, in connection with the formation of the beasts of the field it will be seen, the form וַיַּצַּר with *one yod* occurs.

language. In the Septuagint Version it is rendered by *παράδεισος*, *paradise*, a very suitable rendering, for it denotes a pleasure ground or park, planted with the choicest plants and fruit trees, and upon which the greatest care was bestowed. The palaces of eastern monarchs were generally surrounded by such parks, and are spoken of by travellers that, on entering one of them, it is like being transported into fairy-land, and altogether baffles description. But not only was the garden in itself beautiful, it was also situated in *עֵדֶן* (*Eden*), it is in a delightful region, and hence it was afterwards called the garden of *Eden*. The region or tract of country here called *Eden*, probably was of considerable extent, whilst the garden itself occupied only a small portion of it, hence it is here said to have been planted *מִקְדֶּם* (*mikkedem*) eastward, or in the east of the region. Moses had evidently a design in thus particularizing the situation, and we may justly suppose that it was to indicate that it was the most delightful part. As the Hebrew word *מִקְדֶּם* (*mikkedem*) also denotes of old, from ancient times, some of the Greek fathers have taken it here, in this sense, and have founded upon it the belief that "*paradise was created before the world*"; we need hardly say, that the context altogether forbids such a supposition.

In the midst of the garden there stood two miraculous trees differing altogether from the rest of the trees. The fruit of all the other trees afforded merely transitory pleasure, but the effects which the fruit of these two trees produced were lasting. One of the trees was called "the tree of life," because its fruit possessed the miraculous power of imparting *eternal life*, and the other was called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," because its fruit possessed the power to impart to him who partook of it, the knowledge to distinguish between good and evil. As we have said, the trees were miraculous trees, for immortality, and the knowledge of good and evil, are both the gifts of God. The expression "to know good and evil," in the Scripture language, denotes to understand the nature of good and evil.

Some commentators have supposed that "the tree of knowledge," was so called, because it was by this tree our first parents were to be tried whether they would obey or disobey the commands of God. The tree would, therefore, afford the knowledge by the result of the test as to their obedience or disobedience to their Creator. But from ch. iii. 11, &c., it is evident that the knowing of good and evil was the result from their having eaten of the forbidden fruit, and we can, therefore, hardly come to any other conclusion, than that the tree was so called from its fruit possessing the supernatural power of imparting that knowledge.

10. *And a river went out of Eden to water the garden : and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.*

From the precise description that the sacred writer gives of the locality of *Eden*, the region in which the garden was situated, it is evident that he intended that there should be no mystery as to its location. A river took its rise in Eden, and in its course flowed through the garden to water it, and afterwards divided itself into four ראשים (*rashim*) heads, or chief rivers, that is, into four separate streams. Now, of the four rivers mentioned, the two last named, namely, Hiddekel, (i. e., Tigris), and Euphrates are well known, but such is not the case with the other two, the Pison and the Gihon, there are at present no such rivers bearing these names. Hence some commentators have indulged in the wildest conjectures in their endeavour to identify these rivers, whilst others have adopted a very short and easy mode of getting over the difficulty by supposing that the deluge had effaced all traces of the earthly Paradise. That the locality in which Paradise was situated may have undergone considerable changes either through the flood or subsequent causes is very probable, many well attested changes have taken place from time to time in various parts of our globe, and no one would presume, at this distant time, to fix the precise spot where the garden of Eden was situated. Moses himself only said, that "the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden," he does not describe the *situation* of the garden, but the *situation* of the region called Eden. Now, whatever difficulty we may at present experience in discovering the rivers Pison and Gihon, it is quite evident that they existed in the time of Moses, for he is particularly careful in laying down their geographical position, which was probably rendered necessary from their not being well known, whilst in naming the fourth river he merely said, "And the fourth river is Euphrates," as this was a familiar river, no further description was necessary. In our endeavour to discover the rivers Pison and Gihon it is obviously necessary not to lose sight of the fact that, according to the statement of the inspired writer, the four rivers have one common source as their origin, or if not originating from one source, at least have a confluence. This distinct statement of Moses has, however, in a most unaccountable manner been altogether eschewed by many writers who have actually taken some of the rivers of Africa, Europe, and India, as the Pison and Gihon. It would be simply a waste of time and space to notice the many exorbitant theories that have been seriously advanced in regard to the location of Eden, some of them hardly less extravagant than the belief of the Mussulmans who hold that it was placed in one of the seven heavens,

and that when Adam was driven out of it, he was thrown down into the island of Ceylon, where he died.

Of all the theories put forward there are only two which are really worthy of notice, namely, either that Eden was situated in the elevated plateau of Armenia, near the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris, or that it was located on the river Shat-el-Arab, formed by the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, which afterwards divides itself again into two branches before it falls into the Persian Gulf. Pison and Gihon are held to be the ancient names of these two branches.

These two theories we will now briefly examine, and we think after we have done with our remarks, the reader will have no difficulty in making his choice as to which of the two he will adopt or give the preference.

Moses describes the four rivers as follows :

11. *The name of the first is Pison : that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is the gold.*

12. *And the gold of that land is good : there is the bdellium and the onyx stone.*

13. *And the name of the second river is Gihon : that is it which compasseth the whole land of Cush, (not Ethiopia as in the English Version.)*

14. *And the name of the third river is Hiddekel : that is it which floweth in front of Assyria, (not towards the east). And the fourth river, it is Euphrates.*

The reader will perceive our rendering differs in two important points from the rendering in the English Version, and the reason will be pointed out in course of our explanations. For convenience sake, we will begin our remarks with the fourth river.

As we have previously observed, the Euphrates being already well known in the time of Moses, he merely gives its name without any further description. This river has two sources in the Armenian mountains, which form two streams, one called Frat and also Kara See (*i. e.*, the Black River), and the other Murad. These two rivers or branches afterwards unite their waters, which form the Euphrates. At Kornah or Kurnah it is joined by the Tigris, and the river takes now the name of Shat-el-Arab, *i. e.*, the river of the Arabs, which divides itself again into two arms before it empties itself into the Persian Gulf, about 90 miles from Kornah. We beg the reader to bear these remarks in mind, as it is on the river Shat-el-Arab where we purpose to locate Eden. The name פרת (*Pherath*), if of Hebrew origin, would be derived from פרה (*parah*), to be fruitful, and so called from its fertilizing the land, by its periodical overflowing like the Nile, when the snow melts in

the mountains of Armenia. If the name is of Arabic origin it would be so called from the sweetish taste of its waters. The Persian name is Ufrata.

Hiddekel, the third river, is unquestionably the Tigris. According to Dan. x. 4, 5, &c., Daniel saw a vision "by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel." It takes its rise in the mountains of Kurdistan, within a few miles of the eastern bend of the Euphrates. Moses describes it as flowing *in the front of* or *before* Assyria, which, from the standpoint where Moses wrote, was actually the case. The rendering of the English version, "which goeth toward the east of Assyria," is not geographically correct, for the Tigris does not flow toward the east of Assyria, but washes it on the west; and seen from Palestine or any western country it flows *before* or *in front of* it. In Genesis the name אֲשֶׁשׁוּר (Ashshur) denotes only the country which formed the ancient kingdom of Assyria, of which Nineveh was the capital, and which was situated in the east of the Tigris. As this river was not so well known in the time of Moses as the Euphrates, he therefore gives a more minute description of the former than he did of the latter. If there were any more proof wanting to identify the Hiddekel with the Tigris, we find it in the derivation of the name. The name חִדְדֶּקֶל (Chiddekel) denotes a *swift arrow*, the Persians at present call it *Tir*, which also signifies an *arrow*, and the river was so called on account of its swiftness. Some of the Rabbinic writers give the name as composed of the words חֵד וְקֵל (*chad wekal*) *swift and light*. Strabo (xi., p. 527), and Pliny (Hist. Nat. vi. 27,) speak of the river having been so called on account of its *swiftness*, the word *Tigris* meaning, in the Medo-Persic language, an *arrow*.

Having now established the identity of the two last rivers, we may next proceed to enquire what river is denoted by Gihon, the second river mentioned. It is here where the difference of opinion commences. Many ancient and modern writers maintain that Gihon is the famous river Nile. This idea seems to have first originated from the word שִׁיחֹר (Shichor) which is the proper Hebrew name for the Nile, being rendered in the Septuagint, in Jer. ii. 18, by Γήω, i. e., Gihon. But this is only one of the many generally acknowledged mistranslations that are met with in the Septuagint, especially in the prophetic writings. Josephus, too, says, "Geon runs through Egypt, and denotes what arises from the east, which the Greek call the Nile." It is difficult to say whether the brief account which Josephus gives of the four rivers was intended to be taken literally or allegorically, the latter is most likely the case, for he also says, "Now the garden was watered by one river, which ran round about the whole earth, and parted into four rivers."

(Antiq. B. 1 ch. 1, par. 3.) He also speaks of the Pison as "running into India, makes its exit into the sea, and is, by the Greeks, called Ganges." Surely, Josephus must have well known, that the Ganges and Nile, could never have formed branches of one river with the Euphrates and Tigris. Some of the Fathers of the Church, either influenced by the rendering of the Septuagint, or by the statement of Josephus, have also taken Gihon to be the Nile. And what is more astonishing, that some modern writers as Bertheau, Kalisch, Bush, and others, have espoused the same opinion. Gesenius regards it to be the Ethiopian Nile. It is impossible to conceive how these writers will reconcile their opinion with the plain and unmistakable language of the sacred writer, which plainly sets forth that the four rivers are branches of *one river*, and as the Euphrates and Tigris are certainly two of the branches, it is impossible that the Nile can also be a branch of it, being separated from the two by mountains and seas. Kalish, indeed, does not attempt to reconcile it, but ascribes it to the deficiency of geographical knowledge possessed by the Israelites in common with the other eastern nations. (Comment. on Genes. p. 94.) It is quite possible that the ancient Hebrews were no more advanced in secular knowledge than the other eastern nations, but the question here is, not what the people knew, but what Moses, as an inspired writer, knew. Would it be consistent to suppose that Moses, as an inspired writer, was ignorant of the fact that the Nile and Euphrates could not be branches of one river? It seems, however, to be a favourite line of argument with some of the English writers to charge Moses with ignorance. Bishop Colenso, in his attack upon the Pentateuch, has had the audacity to do so; (The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, p. 53;) and so likewise the Rev. C. W. Goodwin, in his Mosaic Cosmogony. (Essays and Reviews, p. 278.)

But it may well be asked, if Moses had really meant the Nile, how does it happen that he here employs the term גִּיחוֹן (*Gichon*) *Gihon*, whilst in all other places where he has occasion to speak of that river he always uses the Egyptian word יָאָר (*yeor*) *i. e.*, *river*; (see Gen. xli. 1, 2, 3, &c; Exod. i. 22, &c., or נַחַר מִצְרַיִם (*nehar Mitsrayim*) *i. e.*, *the river of Egypt*, (Gen. xv. 18;) or נַחַל מִצְרַיִם (*nachal Mitsrayim*) *i. e.*, *the stream of Egypt*. (Numb. xxxiv. 5.) Even the branches or canals of the Nile are spoken of by the sacred writers merely by using the Egyptian word יָאָר (*yeor*) *river*, in the plural. (See Ps. xxviii. 44; Is. vii. 18.) From the peculiarly dark muddy water of the Nile, the Hebrews gave it the name שִׁיחֹר (*Shichor*) *i. e.*, *the muddy or black river*; but although it is very frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, it never is called Gihon; and there

is not the slightest indication that it was known among the ancient Hebrews by that name.

As we have above stated, the idea of identifying Gihon with the Nile had its inception in the mistranslation of the Hebrew name גִּיחוֹן (*Shichon*) by Γήων, *i. e.* *Gihon* in the Septuagint, and we have here only another example of the great mischief mistranslations may give rise to in building up false theories.

Far more reasonable is the supposition that the Gihon is the Aras, the ancient Araxes, a river of Armenia, which rises not far from the Euphrates, and which in its course is joined by the large river Kur (the ancient Cyrus), and afterwards empties itself in the Caspian Sea. Among the eminent writers who hold this opinion are Reland, Calmet, Bunsen, Kurz, Keil, and Delilzsch. The writers who identify the Gihon with the Araxes, take the Pison either to be the Phasis or Cyrus, thus finding all the four rivers in the high table lands of Armenia, where they accordingly locate Eden. The fact that the four rivers do not now originate from one source, but from different sources which can have no connection, does not, they maintain, militate against their theory, as the earth may have undergone great changes since the creation of man; changes produced either by the Flood or from other causes. That such changes have taken place from time to time, we have already stated, is admitted by the most eminent naturalists, and is further sustained by ancient traditions.

But whilst the theory which locates Eden in the high-lands of Armenia is quite plausible, yet it does not in many respects accord so well with the Mosaic record as the theory which places the terrestrial Paradise on the Shat-el-Arab, the river formed by the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, and which divides itself again into two arms before emptying in the Persian Gulf, about ninety miles from Kornu. According to this theory some regard the most easterly of these channels to be the Pison. This opinion was maintained by Calvin, Scaliger, and others. But Horetius on the contrary, proved beyond doubt that the Pison was the westernmost of the two channels, and Gihon the easterly channel. This view was also entertained by the eminent and world-renowned Oriental scholar Bochart, by Morinus, Prof. Schickhard, Father Kircher, Hopkins, Pressel, and the Rev. Edward Wells in his "Geography of the Old and New Testament," and by many other eminent scholars. Let us then briefly examine whether the two arms of the Shat-el-Arab really answer to the geographical position of the Pison and Gihon as given by Moses.

The etymology of the name גִּיחוֹן (*Gichon*) *Gihon*, in itself affords no assistance in identifying the river, it signifies merely *a breaking or bursting forth*, and would, therefore, be a proper

appellation for many rivers. Indeed, in 1 Kings i. 33. and 2 Chron. xxii. 30, it occurs as the name of a fountain near Jerusalem, but which is more frequently called שִׁלּוֹחַ (*Shiloach*) *Siloam*, i. e., a sending forth. It is, however, a very suitable name for any one of the two arms, as the tides are very violent at that end of the Persian Gulf, and the river may have obtained its name from its breaking over the banks, and in a similar manner the other river received its name Pison. The sacred writer, however, describes its geographical position "that is it which compasseth the whole land of Cush," which was evidently intended as a guide in identifying the river, and we must, therefore, endeavour to find out what tract of country is here denoted by "Cush." Now, according to Gen. x. 6, Cush was the eldest son of Ham, and after him were the countries called which his descendants inhabited. It was also customary, just as it is with us now, of calling the inhabitants by the name of the country which they occupied, as (*Cushi*) a Cushite. In the English version the Hebrew terms *Cush* and *Cushi* are always rendered *Ethiopia* and *Ethiopian*, which certainly is not suitable in all cases. As for example, in Numb. xii. 1, it is said that "Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the (Cushith) i. e. Cushite women (English version, Ethiopian women) whom he had married."

If we now turn to Exod. ii. 15 to 21, where the marriage and circumstances attending it are recorded, it is evident that Moses did not marry an Ethiopian woman from Africa, but a Midianitish woman of Arabia, for it is allowed that Midian was a country in Arabia situated on the east of the Red Sea. In 2 Chron. xxi. 16, we read "that the Lord stirred up against Jeroboam, the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians that were near the Cushites." By "the Cushites," in this passage must certainly be understood a people inhabiting the Arabian peninsula. This is clearly indicated by the expression "near;" for the Arabians could certainly not be said to be *near* the Ethiopians in Africa. There are other passages, besides these we have mentioned, which clearly prove that the descendants of Cush at one time inhabited a portion of Arabia. In course of time some of the Cushites no doubt crossed the Red Sea, and planted a colony in Africa. Hence, the Ethiopic language belongs to the Shemitic family of languages. The name Ethiopian is of Greek origin from *αἶθω*, to burn, and *ὤψ*, face, hence *Αἰθίοψ*, an Ethiopian, i. e., sunburned, and was given to them, or adopted by them, at a later period.

We have seen, that it is clear from Scripture that *Cush* was also the name of a tract of country in Arabia, it will be necessary, in the next place, to show in order to establish the identity of Gihon with the easterly channel, that the Arabian Cush was washed by this river.

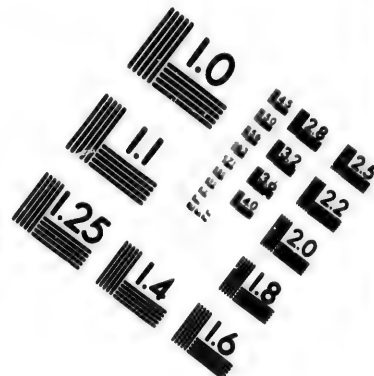
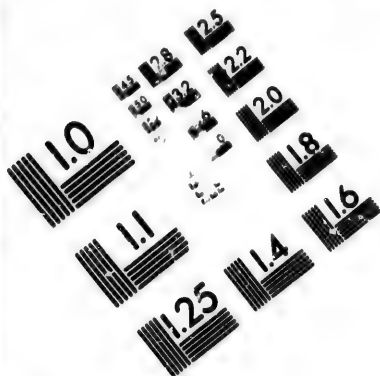
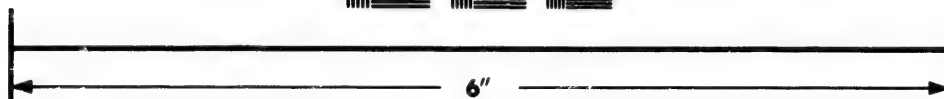
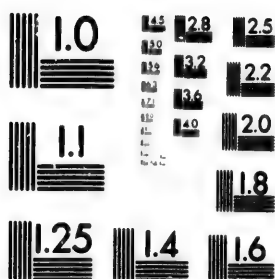


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Susiana, a province of Persia, derived its name from Susa, its capital. The territory of this province was enlarged by Ptolomy, so as to include also the large province of Elam (Elymais), which extends as far as the coast of the Persian Gulf at the east of the mouth of the Euphrates. This territory is now called Chuzistan or Khuzistan, that is, *the country of the Cushites*, just as Hindoostan means *the country of the Hindoos*. Some of the Arabian and other Oriental geographers call it Churestan, but this slight change in the orthography of the name has evidently originated in the carelessness of the transcribers, as the Arabian and Persian letter *z* is merely distinguished from the letter *r* by having a dot above it. Indeed, according to some writers, the inhabitants of the country merely call it *Chus*. In 2 Kings xvii. 24, the same region is called "Cuthah," which is only the Aramaic form of the Hebrew name *Cush*. When Shalmaneser carried the ten tribes into captivity, Cuthah was one of the countries from which he transported a colony to repeople Samaria. There are other circumstances besides those we have noticed which tend to establish the identity of Khuzistan with the land of Cush mentioned by Moses, and if so, we may rest satisfied that the easterly channel of the Shat-el-Arab (or mouth of the Euphrates, or of the Tigris, which comes to the same,) is the river Gihon, which washes or runs along the side of the Province of Elymais, which, as we have shown, forms a part of Khuzistan.

This point being settled, we think we shall have little difficulty in proving the identity of the westerly channel of the Stat-el-Arab with the Pison mentioned by Moses.

The river Pison being either less familiarly known, or was intended to serve as a more exact guide in tracing the river Gihon, its geographical position is dwelled upon at greater length than at those of the other three rivers. "The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* the gold. And the gold of that land is good: there is the bdellium and the onyx stone." (vv. 11, 12.)

The Hebrew name of the river is פִּישׁוֹן (*Pishon*), and denotes a *spreading*, and, like the river Gihon, was no doubt so called from its overflowing the neighbouring country caused by the high tides we have already spoken of. Jesus, the son of Sirach, makes allusion to the overflowing of this river in Ecclesiasticus, he says: "He (God) filleth all things with His wisdom, as Pison." (ch. xxiv. 25.) This river is said to wash the country Havilah, or rather, according to the Hebrew orthography of the name, *Chavilah*, which received its name from חַוִּילָה (*Chavilah*) one of the sons of Joktan mentioned Gen. x. 29, and whose descendants inhabited a country near

the Persian Gulf. In Gen. xxv. 18, Moses speaks of the descendants of Ishmael as dwelling "from Havilah to Shur," by which the sacred writer probably indicates that they inhabited the whole extent of that portion of Arabia which lies between Egypt to the west, and the Persian Gulf in the east. Niebuhr in his well known work "Description of Arabia," speaks of a town and district on the Persian Gulf called *Chavila*. Pliny calls the people inhabiting that region *Chavelæi*. And so, in the names given to the inhabitants of that locality by other writers, the ancient name Havilah is still discernible.

But the sacred writer further describes the country as being also famous for its pure gold. Many writers bear testimony to the purity of the gold of Arabia. Diodorus states that in Arabia was found natural gold, and of such bright colour, that it resembled the brightness of fire, and so pure that it required no purifying. (Lib. ii. cap. 14; Lib. iii. cap. 3.) The sacred narrative states also, that in this region was found "the bdellium," and "the onyx stone." Now here arises the question, what are we to understand by the *bdellium*?—The Hebrew name is *בדלל* (*bed. lech*) but unfortunately its etymology is doubtful, though Bochart and other eminent writers conjecture that it means something *selected, precious* as if derived from the verb *בדל* (*badal*), *to select*. Josephus, and some of the Patristic writers, favour the supposition that it is an *aromatic gum*, the *βδέλλιον* (*bdellion*), of the Greeks, which, according to Pliny, is the gum of a tree common in Arabia. Some modern writers have supposed it to be the gum of the *Balsamodendron Mukul* or *B. pubescens*, belonging to the order *amyridaceæ*, the Myrrh order. Many of the most eminent Rabbinic writers, on the other hand, have taken the term to denote *pearls*, and their opinion has been espoused by far the greatest number of modern writers, and certainly has much in its favour, and altogether obviates the objections which may be urged against the *gum* theory. As the *bdellium* is mentioned in connection with pure gold and the onyx stone, it is natural to suppose that it likewise denotes something precious, which would not be the case if it meant a *gum*, which is very common in Arabia, and by no means costly. Then again, *bdellium* occurs only twice in the Scriptures, namely, in the passage under consideration, and in Num. xi. 7, where Moses is describing the manna, he says that it was "as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium." It was round like coriander seed, but what was its colour? The answer to this question will be found in Exod. xvi. 14, where the manna is likened to "the hoar-frost," which is white, and in verse 31 it is described to be "like coriander seed, white." Both the form and colour are suitable to *pearls*, but not to the *gum*.

Now, both ancient and modern writers bear testimony to the great quantity of pearls that are obtained in the Persian Gulf, and that nowhere are finer ones to be found. Nearchus, who conducted the fleet of Alexander the Great, from the mouth of the Indus to the Persian Gulf, 325 B.C., speaks of an island in that gulf as abounding in *pearls* of great value. Pliny too, after praising the pearls of the Indian seas, goes on to say, that those that are fished towards Arabia in the Persian Gulf are worthy of the highest commendation. (Plin. lib. vi. c. 26; lib. ix. c. 35). Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, in his notes on foreign lands—originally written in Hebrew—expresses the opinion that by the bdellium are meant pearls, and speaks of having been an eye-witness to pearl fishing in the Persian Gulf.

We have now only to notice yet the onyx stone which the sacred narrative informs us to be a product of Havilah. The Hebrew name of this gem is שֹׁהָם (*shoham*) but unfortunately the etymology of the word is doubtful, and the several passages of Scripture where it occurs, likewise throw no light upon the subject as to what particular gem is indicated by it. In the Septuagint it is rendered here by *πράσινός*, i. e. the *beryl*, but in Job xxviii. 16, it is rendered by *ὄνυξ*, i. e. the *onyx*. Most of the ancient writers are in favour of the *beryl*, but the opinion among modern writers preponderates in favour of the *onyx*. In Job xxviii. 16, it is spoken of as of great value, and its preciousness may also be inferred from having formed one of the twelve precious stones in the BREAST-PLATE of the High Priest. The Greeks called the gem *ὄνυξ*, i. e., nail, whence the English term *onyx*, from its colour resembling the tinge of the human nail, or the flesh under the nail. It is, however, of no importance whatever whether we take the shoham to be the *beryl* or the *onyx*, for both ancient and modern writers testify that Arabia was once very famous for its precious gems. Pitts, in his "Account of the Mahometans," as an eye witness, tells us that precious stones for rings and bracelets are even now brought from Arabia Felix in great quantities, to the annual fair held at Mecca, during the last ten or twelve days of the stay of the pilgrims there (p. 142.) Strabo states that the riches of Arabia, which consists in precious stones, and excellent perfumes, the trade whereof brought a great deal of gold and silver to the inhabitants. The gold of the country itself, made Augustus to send Aelius Gallus thither, in order to make those nations his friends, and draw to himself their riches, or to subdue them. Diodorus speaks also of the precious stones of Arabia, and that they are highly valued for their variety and the brightness of their colours. Pliny too, assures us, that

the precious stones that are brought from Arabia are most highly valued. He also states, that the ancients believed, that the onyx stone was only to be found in the mountains of Arabia.

From the foregoing remarks, it will now be seen, that there is a country near the Persian Gulf, called Havilah, and which abounded in all those products mentioned by Moses, we may take it, therefore, for granted that the river which waters the country is the river Pison.

The country on each side of the Shat-el-Arab is spoken of by ancient and modern writers to be exceedingly beautiful and fertile. Although it very seldom rains there, yet on account of the richness of the soil, and being well watered by the river, the land is very productive.

As regards the order in which the four rivers are mentioned by Moses, Wells has rightly accounted for it, inasmuch as Moses wrote in Arabia Petrea, or some place near it, the river Pison was the nearest to him, and hence is mentioned first, then the Gihon being the channel that presented itself next, is mentioned as the second river; then, passing over this river, and turning to the left hand to come back where Moses was writing, we meet with the Tigris, and hence is mentioned as the third river; and so the Euphrates is naturally the fourth river according to the method adopted by Moses in the naming of the rivers.

From what has now been said, we may safely conclude that Eden, the region in which the earthly Paradise was planted, was situated on the river now called Shat-el-Arab, below the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, and that it was this river which passed through the garden of Eden to water it. In the time of Moses the river thus formed by the combined waters of the Tigris and Euphrates apparently had no name, hence the sacred writer merely says, "And a river went out of Eden," the name Shat-el-Arab is comparatively modern.

15. *And the Lord God took the man, and placed him in the garden of Eden, to keep it and to till it.*

The sacred writer has already stated, in verse 8, that God put the man in the garden which he had planted; but as the description of the locality of the earthly Paradise, which was introduced by way of parenthesis, had in a measure interrupted the strain of the narrative, it was necessary in resuming it again to repeat that statement. There is, however, a marked difference in the two statements which is not apparent in the translation. In verse 8, where the sacred historian merely states the fact that God put the man in the garden, he employs the ordinary verb *וַיִּשֶׂם* (*wai-yasem*) and he put or placed, but

on taking up the strain of the narrative again in verse 15 he uses the far more comprehensive verb *וַיַּנְחֵהוּ* (*wai-yannichehu*) literally, *and he caused him to rest*, implying that not only did God assign to him the garden as a place of abode, but that he was also to lead a life of rest, peace, and contentment. There was nothing omitted on the part of the Creator to render the happiness of man complete. Created in God's image, endowed with immortality, a garden especially prepared for him by his Maker for his abode, and placed there to lead a life of perfect happiness. But the verse contains another very important statement, not given in verse 8, and that is, man was by his own exertion to till and keep the garden. God designed man to be perfectly happy, but not to lead an idle life; and it requires yet to be proved that idleness in anywise contributes to human happiness, but, on the contrary, it is a prolific source from whence spring mischief, crime, and misery. Mere labour itself, in tilling the ground, was at first a pleasant recreation, toil and the exhausting of strength in tilling the ground, as well as the multifarious anxieties often attending agricultural pursuits, were the direct consequences of the curse pronounced upon the ground on account of our first parent's sin: "cursed be the ground for thy sake, in pain shalt thou eat of it all thy life." (Ch. iii. 17).

But Adam was not only to till the garden, he was likewise "to keep it." The Hebrew verb *שָׁמַר* (*shamar*) here employed is very expressive, it denotes *to keep, to preserve, to watch, to guard*; Adam was to preserve it in perfect order, and in its primitive beauty, and to guard it from the depredation of the animals. As consummate order pervades all the works of God, so we find that from the beginning the Almighty designed that among men also *industry* and *order* as twin brothers should go hand in hand. We have in this verse also the first institution of agricultural pursuit, thus having the distinguished honour conferred upon it in being instituted by God Himself, and appointed as the occupation of the first human being. No wonder, then, that it should form throughout the world the most important occupation upon which the welfare of nations chiefly depends. No country under the most favourable circumstances could sustain a large population, if the people had merely to depend upon the chase or the natural productions of the ground.

16. *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.*

17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Although man at his creation was advanced to a high degree

of excellence and holiness, having been created in the image and likeness of God, yet it was not to such a state of perfection as to render it impossible for him to commit sin. Even the angels are not absolutely perfect in the sight of God, they even may err.

"Behold" says Eliphaz "He puts no trust in His servants ;
And His angels He charges with folly." (Job vi. 18.)

As much as to say, even those heavenly beings, who surround the throne of God, and are His special chosen servants, even they are not absolutely perfect, they may possibly err.

Yet man came from his Maker's hands an innocent and sinless being, having *the germ of holiness* deposited in him, which he was to develop by his own free resolution, as a free moral agent, by doing God's Will. Now, the above two verses contain the first commandment given to the parents of the human race, designed to afford them an opportunity to enter upon a course of spiritual development. God's dealings with man are always characterized by the profoundest wisdom, and the strictest justice, and nowhere in the Old Testament is this more strikingly apparent as in the test of obedience, which it pleased the Almighty to set to our first parents. The test was of the simplest kind. It required neither labour, nor did it demand any deprivation of pleasure. They were allowed to eat of every tree of the garden which was pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; but the tree of knowledge of good and evil, according to verse 9, was not one of these. There is nothing in the account to indicate that the tree possessed any outward charm. In chapter iii. 6, it is indeed said, "and when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes," but this evidently was mere imagination produced by a longing to eat of it. How could Eve see that the tree was good for food ? It might have appeared pleasant to the eye, and yet its fruit might have been most disagreeable, and even poisonous. It was when she began to lust to eat of it, that she imagined it was good for food. "When lust," it is said in the Epistle of James, "hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin : and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (General Epistle ch. i. 15.)

Many writers have erroneously supposed that the creation of Eve took place after the prohibition had been given to Adam, but such is not the case. It is true, the formation of Eve from the rib of Adam is recorded after the giving of the command, but the sacred writers do not always narrate events in the exact order as they happened. In verse nineteen it is also said : "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air ;" but the creation of the fowl had already taken place on the fifth

day, and that of the beasts on the sixth day. And as regards the creation of the first human pair, it is distinctly stated ch. i. 27, 28, "a male and a female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply," &c. From this language it is clear that the creation of Eve took place immediately after the creation of Adam on the sixth day. In the first chapter, however, it is merely stated that the fowl, the beasts, and first human pair were created, the sacred writer, therefore, supplements that account by giving a more detailed account of their respective creation. In giving such supplementary statements, the sacred historians evidently did not deem it necessary to give them in the exact order of time, their sole object was to furnish additional information. Thus also in 1 Kings vi. we have an account of the building of Solomon's Temple, then ch. vii. commences with the statement, that his own house took thirteen years in building, and after this follows a description of the "house of the forest of Lebanon" which Solomon built, but at verse thirteen is introduced the statement, "And King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre," and the narrative then goes on to say, that he was a widow's son, that he was filled with wisdom, and a skilled workman, and that he came to King Solomon and wrought all his work. Here then, if we were to insist upon that the narrative states the facts in regular order as they happened, then it would represent Solomon as sending for Hiram thirteen years after the Temple "had been finished throughout all the parts thereof." But what is here introduced about Hiram and the work he did for Solomon is merely intended to furnish additional information regarding the structure of the Temple and its vessels, and especially as to by whom the magnificent workmanship was executed. No doubt, this statement would have been more appropriately connected with chapter vi., but in criticising a book we must make due allowance for the existing customs of the time when it was written, and as Scripture furnishes other examples of this peculiar mode of recording events, it is evident that it was a common style of narration among the Old Testament writers.

As to the command itself which God saw fit to impose in order to test the obedience of man whom He had created, it has indeed been frequently cavilled at by writers and lecturers. The whole account of the *fall of man* has been pronounced as "repulsive to man, derogatory to the Deity, and as altogether absurd." From sceptics and neologists, considering their well known views regarding Biblical subjects in general, such a statement can hardly cause any surprise; not so, however, when coming from men who profess to preach Holy Scripture as the inspired Word of God. It is simply imposing upon the

credulity of their hearers or readers who may not be able to judge of the soundness or unsoundness of their fine spun arguments, by telling them that the Mosaic account of the Creation, the Fall of Man, the Deluge, the Confusion of Languages, &c., &c., "merely embody some kind of allegorical teaching, yet, this does in nowise affect the fundamental doctrines of the Bible." Be not deceived, reader, by such delusive argument, it is merely put forward as a covering to conceal the fearful consequences that must inevitably result from such a teaching.

To question the truthfulness of the Mosaic account of the Fall of Man, means the discarding of the most essential doctrines of the Scriptures, or to speak more plainly, the rejecting of the whole Bible as an inspired book. If the narrative of the Fall of Man is mere "fiction," as some writers assert, or "contains merely an allegory," as others maintain, then man was not created an immortal being, death entered not into the world on account of sin, the offering of sacrifices was a meaningless ceremony, and so forth.

But let us for a moment examine the objections urged against the prohibition by modern writers.

What has chiefly called forth the fierce criticism, is the *simple nature of the command, and the severity of the punishment*. It is maintained that the mere eating of the fruit of a tree, should have brought about such a catastrophe affecting the whole human race, is against common sense, and common justice. That it is also impossible to conceive, a holy, merciful, and just God should visit a mere disobedient act which was harmless in itself with such a fearful punishment. The objection at first sight seems reasonable, and no wonder that when the subject is handled by men of eloquence, who possess the gift of clothing their statements in fascinating language that many may become impressed by their arguments, and though they may not in all cases entirely fall in with their views, yet the seed of doubt is sown in their minds which may sooner or later germinate and develop into scepticism or infidelity. Such, we regret to say, has been the result from a lecture lately delivered in Toronto by a well known preacher from the United States, who has expressed his opinion on the subject in unmistakable language. We cannot say whether his remarks on this subject were applauded, like in some other cities where he had been delivering the same lecture, but this much we know, that his remarks tended to unsettle the minds of some of his hearers, for we have been appealed to and asked whether "the Mosaic account of the Fall of Man must necessarily be taken in a literal sense?" For our part, we have never discovered the slightest difficulty connected with the subject, so far as the human mind is capable

of comprehending it. No doubt, there are some points connected with it, which are beyond the comprehension of the finite understanding of man; but those must, like other mysterious subjects of Scripture, be accepted as forming a part of that *scheme of redemption*, a perfect knowledge of which will only be revealed at its full consummation.

Our adverse critics in treating this subject, have at the outset fallen into the error by judging the prohibition given to Adam by the same standard and merits as the other Biblical commandments, and present existing laws, ignoring the fact that this prohibition is a commandment *per se*, given for a special purpose, and suitable to special circumstances. When viewed in this light all the objections which modern criticism has conjured up against it will at once disappear. Man, as we have stated, had at his creation the *germ of holiness* implanted in him, yet he was at the same time endowed with a *free will* in order that his reward might be greater if growing in holiness more and more by his own free moral agency. Had the *will* of man been constrained to do good only, he could have had no claim to a reward, for in that case he would merely have done what he was obliged to do. By constituting him a free agent, it called forth on his part the exercise of judgment with which God had endowed him, either to do, or to resist. Now it pleased God to put this *free will* of man to test, and for this purpose He gave him a command. This command was of such a character as to be suitable to the *condition* of the newly created pair, and the situation in which they were then placed. In teaching a child, the first lesson is naturally of the simplest kind, so that it may not tax too much the untutored mind. What more natural than that the first commandment given to the first human pair should be of such a simple nature as would require no great strain of mind on their part to understand it. Then again, we must take into consideration, that in the situation in which Adam and Eve were then placed, none of the *moral laws* which were afterwards instituted, would have been in the least suitable in Paradise. Adam and Eve were the only human occupants, so that any moral commandment regarding the conduct of man towards man would have been a dead letter. Why do not those who are so loud in declaiming against this prohibition display their own wisdom by showing what would have been a more suitable and consistent commandment? One which would satisfy all the demands of modern criticism? They well know that this would involve an impossibility, for it would be a futile attempt to satisfy the whims of modern critics. Had the test been of a more severe nature, it would have been pronounced unsuitable to the untutored mind of the newly created pair, and declared arbitrary and tyrannical.

Critics lay much stress upon the *severity* of the punishment as compared with the *insignificance* of the deed. But we have already stated that this commandment cannot be judged by the standard of any other Scriptural commandment or secular law. It is also inseparably connected with the Divine scheme of redemption, and therefore, involves a mystery which is beyond the limit of human understanding to comprehend fully in this life. This much, however, is clearly revealed, that by God's mercy, the sting of death has been removed by having been made a way by which man may enter into greater happiness and glory than the earthly Paradise could have afforded.

A writer has pertinently remarked, in speaking on the origin of evil, 'Where, I ask, is any injustice, or even unkindness done to him by Deity? Where is any moral improbability that such a traitor should be; or any just inconsistency chargeable on the attributes of God in consequence of such his being? Whom can he in reason accuse but himself for what he is? And what misery can such an one complain of, which is not the work of his own hands? And lest the great offender should urge against his God, why didst thou make me thus? Is not the answer obvious, I made thee, but not thus. And on the rejoinder, why didst thou not keep me as thou madest me? Is not the reply just, I made thee reasonable, I led thee to the starting place: I taught thee, and set thee going well in the beginning; thou art intelligent and free, and hast capacities of Mine own giving; wherefore didst thou throw aside My Grace, and fly in the face of thy Creator?'

Some have cavilled at the expression, "on the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,"* by asserting that Adam and Eve did not die, but lived centuries after the fall. The language simply means, that on the day they transgressed the commandment, they should become *mortal*. When they sinned, they sowed the seed of death; it was then that the process of dissolution commenced, and ended in their returning to dust.

18. *And the LORD God said, It is not good for man to be alone; I will make for him an help meet for him.*

God created man a social creature, with affections suitable

* In the original it is מוֹת תָּמוּת (moth tamuth, lit., to die thou shalt die. The Hebrews express the *certainly* of the fulfilment of an action, or *intensity* of various kinds by using the *infinitive* before a *preterite* or *future*. As for example פָּקַד פָּקַדְתִּי (pakod pakatti) lit., to visit I have visited, i. e., I have surely visited.—(Exod. iii. 16.) In such passages where this construction is employed to express *intensity*, the student must be guided by the context in translating. Thus אָכַל תֹּאכֵל (achol tochel) lit. to eat thou shalt eat, i. e., thou mayest freely eat.—(Gen. ii. 16.)

to social intercourse; he stood therefore in need of a companion in order to render his happiness complete. This want God graciously determined to supply, "I will make for him an help meet for him." The Hebrew word עֶזֶר (*ezer*) admits of being translated *a helper*, and the more literal rendering of כְּנֶגְדּוֹ (*kenegdo*) is, *corresponding to him, his counterpart*, so that it might be rendered *a helper corresponding to him*, which implies that the woman is in every respect his equal, and hence, well rendered in the Septuagint "like him;" and so also in the Vulgate.

REMARKS ON THE CHANGES MADE IN THE REVISED VERSION.

The last number was in the press when a copy of the Revised Version came to hand. I, therefore, offer a few remarks here. In commenting upon the changes made in the Revised Version, or on passages which I consider ought to have been changed, I shall endeavour to make my remarks as plain as possible, so that the reader will be able to judge for himself as to their soundness. In accordance with my usual practice, to make the Bible as much as possible its own interpreter, my arguments will always be based upon Scriptural authority. In difficult philological questions the ancient and modern versions, and the most eminent critics will be appealed to.

At the outset I must say, that I think it is a pity that the division of the chapters and verses in the Authorized Version was not adhered to. The mode adopted in the Revised Version is not sufficiently distinct, and consequently not so convenient for reference. There was no necessity of giving the contents of the chapter: that was very properly omitted; but there should have been space left between each chapter, and the number of it given. The revisers apparently adopted the mode of some of the Hebrew editions of the Bible, as for instance, that of LEUSDEN; but the Hebrew letters used to mark the chapters are very bold and readily attract one's notice. The division of verses, too, is more plainly indicated in the Hebrew Bible than it is in the English Bible. In the latter the *period* is used for that purpose. But the period is also used for division of sentences, and is, therefore, no distinctive mark for division of verses. In the former, on the contrary, the division of verses is invariably indicated by two bold points, thus : called סוף פסוק (*soph pasuk*) i. e., *end of verse*, and which never occur anywhere else. Yet, in most

modern editions of the Bible, there is a large space left between each chapter, with the number of the chapter. I have in my library five different editions, in four of which the division of chapters is indicated in this manner.

Changes made in the rendering in Gen. i. and chap. ii. to verse 17.

CHAPTER I.

Authorized Version.	Revised Version.
v. 2. "And the earth was without form and void."	"And the earth was waste and void."

The rendering of the Revised Version is, no doubt, the correct one. It is the same as I have given.

The translation "without form" is not admissible for two very obvious reasons. In the first place, the original does not admit of such a rendering. The words *תהו ובהו* (*thohu wawohu*) signify *desolateness* (or *wasteness*) and *emptiness*, but abstract nouns are often employed instead of adjectives, hence "waste and void," but nowhere in the Bible, or in any other Hebrew work, is any one of the two Hebrew words ever used in the sense "without form." In the second place it is logically incorrect, as it is impossible to conceive anything material subsisting "without form."

Dean Swift has pertinently observed :

"Matter, as wise logicians say,
Cannot without form subsist,
And form, say I, as well as they,
Must fail if matter brings no grist."

The translators, no doubt, used the expression "without form," to convey the idea that the earth was *a shapeless mass*; but that is not the meaning which Moses wishes to convey, which is, rather, that the earth was at that time, waste and empty, that none of those organized beings existed upon it, before they were afterwards called into being or made by the Creator. The rendering "without form" is only found in the English Version, followed by the French "*sans forme et vide*."

protestante

Authorized Version.	Revised Version.
v. 5. "And the evening and the morning were the first day."	"And there was evening and there was morning one day."

The rendering of the Revised Version is the more literal one: it is the same as I have given in the Commentary. Yet the rendering of the Authorized Version is also admissible, as the *cardinal number* *אחד* (*echad*) *one*, is sometimes used as an *ordinal*, as for example, Gen. viii. 5, 13.

Authorized Version.	Revised Version.
v. 8. "The second day."	"A second day."

The reader, on referring to the Commentary, p. 16, will perceive that I there drew his attention to the peculiarity, that in the original *the article* in the enumeration of the days of creation, is only used with *the sixth day*, and he will find there also an explanation given, why the article is probably omitted with the other days. The use of the *indefinite article* with the second, third, fourth, and fifth days, and the *definite article* with the sixth day in the Revised Version is awkward. In my rendering I have not expressed the article, except with the sixth day.

Authorized Version.

v. 20. "And fowl that may fly above the earth."

Revised Version.

"And let fowl fly above the earth."

The rendering of the Revised Version is the literal one, and is the same as I have given in the Commentary. The reader on referring to my comments on the verse, p. 26, will perceive that I there pointed out, that according to the Authorized Version, the waters were also made the agent in bringing forth the fowl, which is at variance with what is said in ch. ii. 19.—(See my remarks, p. 26.)

Authorized Version.

v. 21. "And God created great whales."

Revised Version.

"And God created the great sea-monsters."

The rendering of the Revised Version is the correct one.—(See my remarks, p. 27.)

CHAPTER II.

Authorized Version.

v. 2. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day."

Revised Version.

"And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day."

The mere change of "finished" for "ended" is very trivial, and I must confess that I feel disappointed that the ambiguity which existed in the Authorized Version has not been removed. According to both translations God "ended" or "finished" His work *on the seventh day*, and yet *rested on the seventh day*. I have translated: "And God had finished His work on the seventh day," and have given Scriptural authority that it is admissible.—(See my remarks, pp. 58, 59.) But even if the existence of a *pluperfect tense* in the Hebrew could not be established, I maintain that the context alone would justify the rendering which I have given.

Authorized Version.

v. 13. "The whole land of Ethiopia."

Revised Version.

"The whole land of Cush."

The revisers very properly retained the Hebrew term "Cush," as the rendering "Ethiopia" is certainly not suitable in all places where it occurs in the Old Testament, and such is the case here. (See my remarks on the word in the Commentary, p. 61.)

Authorized Version.

v. 14. "That is it which goeth toward the East of Assyria."

Revised Version.

"That is it which goeth in front of Assyria."

The rendering of the Revised Version is the correct one. I have pointed out in my remarks on the verse (p. 88) that the rendering in the Authorized Version is not *geographically correct*.

All important changes will hereafter be noticed in their respective places.

19. *And the LORD God formed out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them* בָּי (lit.: to each one): *and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was its name.*

The creation of the fowl of the air and the beasts of the field is already spoken of as having taken place in ch. i., the former on the fifth day, and the latter on the sixth day. But the sacred historian evidently repeats it here again as a kind of introduction to the naming of the animals, and at the same time furnishes the important information as to the manner in which they were created, "the Lord God formed out of the ground." "And brought them," that is, *caused them to come*. We have already stated that, according to Scripture language, a person that causes a thing to be done, or oversees a work, is spoken of as having done it himself. (See History of Hebrew Literature, p. 51, *et seq.*) But the verb יָבֵא (*yave*) being in (*Hiphil*) the *causative conjugation*, it may, therefore, be here translated, instead of "brought them," by "caused them to come." The same verb is so rendered in Amos viii. 9: "And it shall come to pass in that day, said the LORD God, וְהִבֵּאתִי (*vehevethi*), and I will cause the sun to go down* at noon." "To see what he would call them." In ch. i. God gave the names Himself to the objects which He created, but here God affords Adam an opportunity to exercise the intellect with which He had endowed him,— "And whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was its name." The names which Adam gave were so appropriate that they required no change. When we examine the names of animals and birds in the Hebrew, it will be found that they are not mere meaningless names, but expressive of *habit* or *propensity*, or are imitations of *sound*

* The verb בָּרָא (*bo*) to come, when used in connection with שָׁמֶשׁ (*shemesh*) sun, takes the signification, to go down, to set.

or cry. In some cases the meaning cannot now be traced, the roots having become obsolete; in most cases, however, there is no difficulty in tracing the derivation. We may refer the reader to the History of Hebrew Literature, p. 13, *et seq.*, where we have already treated on this subject, and given a few examples.

This portion of the Mosaic account has also been made the subject of much cavil among modern critics and sceptics. They assert that "the representations of all animals being brought before Adam in the first instance, and subsequently of their being all collected in the ark, if we are to understand them as applied to the living inhabitants of the whole world are zoologically impossible." (Lawrence's Lectures on Physiology, ch. i., p. 130.)

We have here, in answer to this objection, to repeat again what we have on a former occasion stated, that with the Almighty there is nothing impossible. Surely it requires no great stretch of imagination to suppose that the same Being who could call the creatures into existence, could also sustain them under any circumstances. There is, however, nothing in the passage before us, that requires us to believe that all the animals and fowls that were created were brought to Adam, but merely those that were in the garden of Eden. It is evident that the sacred writer does not wish to convey the idea that Adam named all the living creatures that were created, for the inhabitants of the water are not at all mentioned. The expression, "and whatsoever the man called every living creature," simply means *every one that he named*.

Keil and Delitzsch remark on our verse: "The time when this took place must have been on the sixth day, on which, according to chap. i. 27, the man and woman were created: and there is no difficulty in this, since it would not have required much time to bring the animals to Adam to see what he would call them, as the animals of paradise are all we have to think of." With regard to the animals collected in the ark, that subject will be fully noticed when we come to treat on the deluge.

The account of the sacred writer given above, of the creation of the beasts of the field and fowls of the air, strikes at the root of the *evolution theory* of modern scientists, which teaches, that every living thing originated "from some one primeval form," by gradual development. It is by no means surprising that this novel theory should have been so favourably received by many, since novelties seem to possess peculiar charms, and, as we have already shown, that even the most absurd theories have found many ardent admirers even among the educated. It is, however, very remarkable that we should find *ministers*

bowing down to this new idol, and still more extraordinary in their declaring to their congregations that the theory does in nowise affect the verity of the sacred narrative, or the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The Scriptures teach in unmistakable language, that the "LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.) They further teach that man came from his Maker's hands a perfect and immortal being, that he was gifted with speech, so that on the very day of his creation he was enabled to give names to the animals. Now what does the evolution theory teach? It teaches on the contrary, "that man has proceeded from a modification of some lower animal." (See Huxley on the Origin of Species, p. 147.) According to this then, man became what he is only by a very long process of modification or development, for Darwin declares that "all changes are slowly affected," and the Scriptural account of the creation of man must, therefore be only a myth. Let us next see what the evolution theory teaches as to the origin of the power of speech.

Huxley tells us, "that it may depend upon structural differences which shall be absolutely inappreciable to us with our present means of investigation," (p. 149). If speech depends upon "structural differences," then man, during the long period that these "structural differences" occupied in perfecting, must have been altogether without speech. Huxley, addressing his audience, says: "I am speaking to you at this moment, but if you were to alter in the minutest degree, the proportion of the nervous forces now active in the two nerves which supply the muscles of my glottis, I should become suddenly dumb." All the time, then, that the change from monkey to man was taking place there could have been no speech. It follows, then, that the Scriptural account of the naming of the animals by Adam must also be a myth. Beecher, in his Lectures on Evolution and Revolution, delivered in the Pavilion in Toronto last summer, told his large and intelligent audience that the evolution theory did in nowise affect the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The Reverend gentleman made the broad statement, without making the slightest attempt to reconcile the Scriptural teaching with the evolution theory of man's descent from a lower animal. A more outrageous statement has never fallen from the lips of any man; and I am grieved to see that other ministers should have made the same statement. Every one, of course, has a perfect right to form whatever opinion he likes upon any subject, but when it comes to promulgating that opinion, especially when affecting a vital doctrine, surely it is nothing but right that it should not go forth into the world without being supported by sound and

incontrovertible arguments. Probably there were some at the Pavilion, and among his audiences in other cities, where he delivered this lecture, who were quite satisfied with the statement—startling as it must have been—simply because it was Beecher who made it. The fame of a person lends force to his utterances; but, I trust, that by far the largest majority of his hearers did not allow themselves to be so easily influenced. This matter admits of no compromise. If man merely descended from a lower animal, then he was not directly created by God, and God did not breathe into his nostrils the Spirit of life, whereby he became an immortal being, and would have remained so, if he had not sinned. "Let us make man in our image—after our likeness." I beg the reader particularly to mark the emphatic language here employed, "our image," "our likeness." "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them," is the *Scriptural account* of the origin of man; the *Evolutionist's account* is, that by a gradual change, which must have taken thousands and thousands of years to effect, man originated from an inferior animal; and yet we are seriously told that these two accounts can be reconciled. The man is not born, and never will be born, who will be able to reconcile these two directly opposite accounts.

Then, as regards the evolution theory itself, there are a hundred knotty points to solve before its doctrine can be fully accepted as an incontrovertible fact. There is, of course, no difficulty in believing that closely allied species may have originated from one common parent, as the plum, nectarine, apricot trees, &c., and so likewise among animals, plants, fishes, and fowls. But there is certainly some difficulty in believing that man, the lion, the whale, and the eagle sprung from one common parent, and one would require something more reliable than mere "analogy," for Darwin himself admits that "analogy may be a deceitful guide"* to confirm us in the belief.

Let us briefly glance at a few of these knotty points which stand in the way of the theory, "that all plants and animals have descended from some one prototype." And here, in the first place, as regards man, let us for a moment take it for granted that the structural differences between him and the ape are not of such a character as to proclude the belief of his descent from some lower order, it would yet require to be shown how became possessed of his *reasoning powers*, which so prominently distinguish him from all other created creatures. Whoever heard an ape utter an intelligent word,

*Origin of Species, p. 48.

much less an intelligent sentence? Why should this reasoning power only be found in man, and not in any other creature, if obtainable by a mere change in the structure of the body? Huxley says, if the equality of the two nerves which supply the muscles of his glottis were in the minutest degree altered, he would become suddenly dumb. This simply means he would have no longer the power to express the ideas which arise in his mind, he could, however, still convey them in writing. A dumb person who, on account of some derangement in his organs of speech cannot express in language what he thinks, yet can do so by signs. Scientists have so far failed to discover how man became possessed of his intellectual powers, and Huxley himself admitted that "this functional difference is vast, and unfathomable, and truly infinite in its consequences." (*Origin of Species*, p. 149.) And that there is "a wide gulf in intellectual and moral matters between man and the whole of the lower creation."—(p. 147.) But he thinks this functional difference "may depend upon structural differences." "May!" Surely in promulgating such a theory which altogether contradicts the Scriptural doctrine, scientists should be able to give something more substantial than a doubtful "may" in sustaining their hypothesis. Some of my readers are perhaps not aware that Darwin, in his work on the "*Origin of Species*," did not say a word on the origin of man. It was Huxley who extended Darwin's theory also to man. Let us next take an example from the animal kingdom, and here we may instance the difference that exists between the harmless and poisonous serpents. All serpents have a strong similitude of form to each other, and yet some species have such strong distinctive characteristics as to preclude altogether the supposition of common origin. How will the evolution theory account for the possession of the deadly poison in some species, whilst other species are perfectly harmless? How did these venomous creatures come to be possessed of this poison? It cannot be accounted for by "a modification of structure," for it is a substance which the harmless serpents do not possess. We can, therefore, come to no other conclusion but that these poisonous species are a distinct creation. Providence has bestowed the poison for the animal's defence, and at the same time provided it with two sharp fangs to readily inflict a wound through which the poison is injected, whilst the species which are harmless are destitute of them. And here, as in all other creative acts, the infinite wisdom of the Creator becomes strikingly apparent. Without this defence the serpent above all other animals would be the most defenceless, and constantly exposed to destruction, being without strength for resistance, without teeth to use as a weapon, and too large to find security in

small holes like the worm. But being furnished with a deadly poison, both man and beasts stand in dread of them, and the latter will never seize them but at an advantage. But not only does the possession of this poison inspire a fear of venomous snakes, but serves also as a kind of protection to the harmless ones. The great similarity to one another excites fear for them all, and as their enemies are not sure which of them are possessed of the poison, they shun the whole tribe. But although the serpent tribes are very numerous—Lacépède has divided them into eight genera, and these are again subdivided into many species—not more than one-tenth of them are venomous, thus Providence seems to have acted with double precaution on bestowing the poison namely, to furnish a general defence for all the snake tribes, but has bestowed the poison on comparatively a small number of them, lest they should become too powerful for the rest of living creatures. Scientists probably will say, that this "may be" all mere chance, but I say it was so ordered by the allwise and merciful Creator.

We may now take an example from the vegetable kingdom, and as the evolution theorists lay so much stress upon the *similarity*, I will select two objects which in appearance are as much alike as well can be. If I were to hold a sprig of *willow* (*salix*), and a sprig of **euphorbia jaquiniflora*—a tropical shrub with beautiful scarlet blossoms—before the reader, he would not be able to distinguish one from the other, they being so much alike; but if he were to pull a leaf from the latter, a milky juice would exude, which is very acrid and poisonous. Now this poisonous substance is the life of the *euphorbia*, but would be the death of the *willow*; how then could one of these have originated from the other by a gradual change? The loss of the milky juice would have killed the *euphorbia* long before it had a chance of becoming a *willow*, whilst, on the other hand, the obtaining of the milky juice would have killed the *willow* long before it had a chance to become a *euphorbia*. The immense differences that characterize the various genera and species form a gulf which the evolution theory will never be able to bridge over. The Scriptural account alone can throw light upon the subject how those vast varieties of forms and characteristics in the living beings originated. Professor Thomas Rymer Jones, King's College, London, very properly remarked: "To understand the laws whereby even the human body is built up, lies not within the power of human industry or human research; much less to

Euphorbiaceæ.—Plants belonging to this order are mostly acrid and poisonous. The order received its name from an ancient celebrated Greek doctor, who employed the juice for medicinal purposes.

comprehend the lengthy series of creation that extends from man, the most exalted form of livings down to the apothetic sponge fixed upon a rock seems equally deprived of sense and motion."

20. *And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field ; but for man* there was not found a help meet for him.*

The naming of the animals by Adam immediately after his creation, clearly shows, as we have already stated, that the power of communication by speech was the direct gift of God implanted in the nature of man, and hence, the ancient Greek poets very appropriately apply the epithet (*μέροψ*) *speech gifted* to man, speech being the peculiar attribute of mankind. The Chinese ascribe the naming of objects to their first and most revered king Fohi, and say that he performed the task so well that "the names given were so appropriate, that the very nature of the things was made known." The Chinese have evidently adopted this idea from the Scriptural account. And ancient philosophers regarded the invention of names for objects an act of the highest human wisdom.

In the preceding verse no mention is made of *the cattle* having been caused to come to man, but in this verse the *בהמה* (*behmah*) "cattle," are distinctly mentioned among the animals that were named, which seems to indicate that the *בהמה* (*behmah*) *domestic animals* must have been present of their own accord ; they having been endowed with a more docile nature, and do not shun the presence of man like the wild beasts.

"But for man there was not found a help meet for him." When the animals passed before Adam to receive their names, he saw that they were all supplied with mates, but among them "there was not found" a mate suitable to him.

21. *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and he slept : and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.*

The creating a helpmate for Adam forms the closing scene of the creation. The Hebrew word *תרדמה* (*tardmah*) is not the ordinary Hebrew word for sleep which is *שנה* (*shenah*), the former rather means a *deep sleep* as rendered in our version, and so likewise in the German Jewish version of Rabbi

לֹא מָצָא (*lo matsa*) literally, *he found not*, but the rendering of the English Version, "there was not found" is quite admissible, as verbs are often construed impersonally to indicate the performance of an action without mentioning by whom it was done.

Solomon Kohen, *tiefen Schlaf* "deep sleep," and by Aquila *καταπόα deep sleep*. Yet, as this sleep was caused in a supernatural way, it is quite probable that the eminent Biblical scholar, Lightfoot, is correct in supposing, that the nature of this sleep was such, that the whole scene of Eve's creation was presented to his imagination, for according to verse twenty-three, Adam was fully aware of the manner in which Eve was formed, for he says, "this is now bone of my bones," &c.

In the creation of Eve we have another remarkable example of the infinite wisdom which pervades all the acts of the Almighty. All the living creatures were at once created in pairs, but not so with respect to man. Why then this exception with the noblest being of the created creatures? It was evidently designed to teach Adam two important lessons. In the first place, it was to teach him that although he had been constituted a ruler over all the created beings, yet that he himself was dependent for everything that may make life happy upon his Creator. What could have inspired Adam more with a sense of his utter dependence, and at the same time have shown him the great love and care which God evinces for His creatures, than a bestowal of a suitable companion to increase his happiness? Secondly, it was to teach him the close relationship that should exist between man and wife, that she was formed for an inseparable union and companionship for life.

22. *And the LORD God built the rib which He had taken from man into a woman, and presented her to the man.*

The rendering in the English version of the verb בָּנָה (*banah*) by "made" does not afford the proper meaning, though it makes good sense. The literal meaning of the verb is, *to build, to construct*, and hence our bodies are spoken of in Scripture as "houses;"—(Job iv. 9:) "How much less *in* them that dwell in houses of clay."—(See also 2 Cor. v. 1.) The rendering in the English Version "and brought her to the man," although not an incorrect translation of the original, yet forms an incongruity, for we would in that case have to suppose that after Eve had been formed, she was taken away some distance and "brought" back again. We have already stated, that most Hebrew verbs have different shades of meaning, and it is therefore necessary to select the one best suited to the context. The verb וַיַּבְיֵאָה (*waivisha*) is evidently here used in the sense "and presented here," and the act indicates the formal and solemn giving away of Eve in the bonds of marriage; and as this act was performed by God himself, hence the marriage bond is spoken of as the covenant of God."

"Who forsaketh the friend of her youth (i. e., her husband,) And forgets the covenant of her God.—(Prov. ii. 17.)

Archbishop Lynch, in a sermon lately delivered on marriage, has neither estimated too highly the sanctity and importance of the marriage bond, nor denounced too severely the loose manner in which this bond is now dissolved. Happily in Canada, religion still spreads its guardian wing over the sanctity of the marriage bond, and divorce can only be obtained by an Act of Parliament, but the easy manner that marriage ties are dissolved in many parts of the United States makes the evil also felt in this country. A year's residence in that country, and a flimsy grievance whether real or imaginary is all that is required to annul a solemn vow made at the altar, it matters not what miseries it may entail upon the deserted family. Surely, it is the duty of every right thinking person to lend a helping hand to put an end to this outrage against morality and religion, which daily brings so much misery, if not utter ruin upon so many families.

23. *And the man said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, for she was taken out of Man.*

"This is now," the original is more expressive זֶה הַנֵּעַמָּה (zoth hap-pa-am) *this is this time or this once*, as much as to say, this is the only occasion that woman originated in this manner. Some interpreters, however, regard the phrase merely as expressive of joyous astonishment, on seeing so exact a counterpart of himself; but the context certainly favours the first explanation. "Bone of my bones," &c., expresses the close relationship that exists between the husband and wife, and on account of this inseparable unity he called her אִשָּׁה (ish-sha) *woman*, which is only the feminine of אִישׁ (ish) *man*, and hence Luther, in his German translation, has well rendered it by *Männin*, i. e., *manness*, if such a word were in use in the English language, and which would also precisely afford the literal meaning of the Hebrew word *ish-shah*. Many of the ancient versions have felt the force of the Hebrew term, and have endeavoured to give as literal a rendering of it as possible. Thus Symmachus employed ἀνδρίς (*andris*) the feminine form of ἀνρ (*a man*.) The Arabic *imrat*, the feminine of *imri*, *a man*. The Vulgate *virago*, the feminine form of *vir*, *a man*.

The Scriptural teaching of the close relationship existing between man and wife has been adopted by some of the heathen nations. The sacred books of the Hindoos and Persians declare that "the bone of woman is united with the bone of man, and her flesh with his flesh, as completely as a stream becomes one with the sea into which it flows." (*Asiatic Researches*, vii. 30.)

It is strange that, with such teaching before them, women should hold such a degraded position among those people. According to the belief of the Greenlanders, women sprang from the thumb of man. (Granz, Grönl, i., 262.)

As might be expected, the Biblical account of the creation of Eve has been made the subject of much cavil among modern critics and sceptics, the latter frequently forgetting that offensive language is no argument. From writers who deny the existence of an Almighty Creator nothing better can be expected, though they might show a little consideration for those who differ from them by being more choice in their language; but that critics who profess to believe in a God should find any difficulty in accepting the narrative as trustworthy, is not easily comprehended. Surely the mighty Being who could create man from the dust of the ground could by the same power create a helpmate for him, as stated in the narrative. Without supernatural agency both acts would be impossible, with supernatural agency nothing is impossible.

25. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cling to his wife, and* they shall be one flesh.*

These are not the words of Adam, who could not well have spoken of father, mother, and a man leaving his parents; but they are the words of Moses, who in order to set forth still more the sanctity and close relationship of the marriage tie, declares that even the fondest associations of childhood must be relinquished, and that however great the affection for parents may be, henceforth the love for his wife must gain the ascendancy. In Matthew xix. 5, 6, the words of our verse are evidently referred to as being a direct declaration of God.

The declaration in our verse lays also the foundation of monogamy, a man was to cling to his *wife* and not *wives*, and, although we find instances of polygamy mentioned in the Old Testament, these must be ascribed to the state of civilization existing at that time. There are, however, no indications that polygamy was practised to any extent among the ancient Hebrews, but quite the reverse seems to have been the case.

25. *And they were both naked, the man and his wife; and they were not ashamed.*

This verse sets before us briefly but vividly the perfect state

* The Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate Versions read "they two" or "both of them," from which it would appear that the word שְׁנֵיהֶם (*shenehem*), i.e., both of them, must have been found in some of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts. In the New Testament, too, wherever the passage is quoted the word "twain" or "two" is expressed. See Matt. xix. 5; Mark x. 8; 1 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. v. 31.

of childlike innocence that existed before sin had entered into the world. Our first parents came from their Maker's hands sinless, and in this state of innocence such a sensation as shame was unknown to them. No disgusting thoughts of any kind disturbed the profound peace that reigned within their hearts. But shame is the result of sin, and no sooner had they eaten of the fruit of the tree of which they were commanded not to eat than their eyes were opened, and "they knew that they were naked," and immediately a feeling of shame came over them, and they hid themselves. Their state of innocence had now departed, and, with it, their peace of mind.

CHAPTER III.

1. *Now the serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman: Hath God indeed said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden.*

The animal here spoken of under the term נָחָשׁ (*nachash*), as the unhallowed instrument in the seduction of our first parents, has both by Jewish and Christian writers in all ages been regarded to have been a *serpent*. The word occurs in other places of the Old Testament as a term for serpent, and there are several passages in the New Testament, which testify to its having been a serpent. It is, therefore, somewhat incomprehensible that any attempt should have been made to force any other signification upon the word. Yet the eminent Biblical scholar, and well-known Commentator, Dr. Adam Clark, has suggested that the original word might denote a "creature of the *ape* or ouran-outang kind." In support of this opinion, Dr. Clark adduced several arguments which, however, crumble to pieces the minute they are touched, as the following few examples will show. He observes "They (serpents) have no *organs* of *speech* or any kind of articulate sound: they can only *hiss*. It is true that an *ass*, by miraculous influence, may speak; but it is not to be supposed that there was any miraculous interference here. God did not qualify this creature with speech for the occasion, and it is not intimated that there was any *other agent*, that did it." It is a wonder that Dr. Clark did not perceive that this argument would weigh as much against the "*ape*" as the *serpent*. Who ever heard an *ape* utter a single intelligent word? We are, however, not to suppose that it was actually the *serpent* that spoke, but rather the evil spirit afterwards

spoken of in Scripture under the name of **הַסָּטָן** (*hassatan*) i. e. *the enemy*, **THE DEVIL**, who had taken possession of the serpent for the purpose of seducing the woman, and thereby to affect the ruin of man. It is true, the text does not distinctly state that such was the case, but the whole tenor of the sacred narrative shows that it could not have been a mere animal that brought about such a fearful catastrophe. Man was so greatly exalted above all other creatures of the earth, being created in the image of God, and having been constituted a ruler over all the animals, that it is altogether unreasonable for a moment to suppose that a creature so inferior to him could have been capable of exercising such an influence over him. In that case the animal would have proved a ruler over man, and not man a ruler over the animal. The sacred writer merely gives the simple occurrence just as it would have appeared to an eye witness, without entering into any particulars, which is a striking proof of the truthfulness of the narrative. A writer has well said, that, "As a narrator, Moses makes a word or two do the work of pictures."

It has always been the universal belief of both Jews and Christians, that the serpent was a mere agent employed by the *evil spirit*. Thus we read in the Apocryphal book: The Wisdom of Solomon, ch. ii. 23, 24: "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side find it." It was, therefore, the devil that spoke, and not the serpent. This is also attested to in the New Testament as John viii. 44; 2 Cor. xi. 3; Rom. xvi. 20; Rev. xii. 9. This doctrine is constantly set forth by the Rabbinical writers, but one quotation must suffice: "And, as a man possessed with an evil spirit, all the works that he doeth, and all that he speaketh, are not, but by reason of the evil spirit that is within him; so the serpent, all the works that he did, and all the words that he spoke, he spoke not, neither did, but by reason of the devil."—*Pirke, Rabbi Eliezer*, ch. 13.)

In many of the heathen religions we find also the evil spirit represented by the serpent, and in most we can trace more or less the principal ideas of the Mosaic narrative embodied. This is especially the case in a most remarkable manner in the account given of the first human pair in the sacred books of the Persians. It is as follows: "The parents of the human race *Mesha* and *Meshiane* lived originally in perfect purity and innocence. **Ormuzd*, the creator of all things, promised

**Ormuzd*, the name of the supreme deity of the ancient Persians, and according to the doctrine of Zoroaster, is the creator of the earthly and spiritual life the lord of the whole universe, the source of light and wisdom, by whom all things were created.

them everlasting happiness if they continued to live a virtuous life. But **Ahriman*, the original source of evil, and chief of the malignant spirits, sent the evil spirit *Dev* to them, who suddenly made his appearance in the form of a *serpent*, and gave them the fruit of a wonderful tree which had the power of imparting immortality, and restoring the dead to life again. No sooner had they eaten of the fruit than their moral excellence was destroyed, and evil thoughts entered into their hearts. *Ahriman* himself then appeared to them in the form of a serpent, and finished the work of seduction. By his artful persuasion they acknowledged him as the creator of everything good instead of *Ormuzd*, and thus forfeited for ever the perpetual happiness which had been promised to them. (*Zend-Avesta*.)

But Dr. Clark continues: "Nor can I find, that the *serpentine genus* are remarkable for *intelligence*. It is true, the *wisdom of the serpent* has passed into a proverb, but I cannot see on what it is founded, except in reference to the passage in question, where the *nachash* which we translate *serpent*; following the Septuagint shows so much intelligence and cunning." Dr. Clark admits—indeed, it could not well be denied—that the wisdom of the serpent has passed into a proverb. Now a proverb expresses briefly and forcibly some practical truth which is generally accepted. Here then, the serpent has again the advantage over the monkey, for notwithstanding the great many stories told of monkeys according to which they display a great deal of intelligence, yet the wisdom of these animals has never passed into a proverb.

In the New Testament, Christ distinctly speaks of the sagacity of the serpent:—"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."—(Matth. x. 16.) Christ did not say, as wise as the serpent which in that case might have been taken to refer to the serpent which tempted Eve, but he says, "as serpents," which implies an inherent sagacity. Christ's declaration agrees also with the declaration in our passage, "the serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field," for he evidently regarded the serpent as the most sagacious of all the animals, and doves the most gentle of the birds.

Aristotle, the chief of the peripatetic philosophers, and who cannot be said to have been influenced in expressing his opinion by anything that is set forth in Scripture, speaks of the whole species of serpents as *μαλιστα επιβουλοσ* extremely insidious.

* *Ahriman* is, according to the doctrine of Zoroaster, the personification of malignity. The original source of all moral and physical evil, the chief of the evil spirits, the king of darkness and death, and the eternal enemy of *Ormuzd* and his kingdom of light.

Cepede says: "The boiga is not only to be praised for its beauty, but may be said to fulfil the old maxim of combining *the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove*."—(Cepede's History of Oviparous Quadrupeds and Serpents.)

Naturalists have recorded many traits of the *prudence* and *cunning* of serpents. One example will suffice to give the reader an idea of the sagacity of these animals. The boa constrictor, before devouring his prey, after which he falls into a state of comparative torpidity, and remains so for several weeks, takes the precaution to make a circuit of some miles in order to discover whether there is any enemy near; and as a small kind of *ant*—which sometimes wholly devours him when in that torpid state—is his greatest enemy, he is particularly careful in his search for them, examining every jungle and mount in his journey.

But further, the very etymological signification of the Hebrew name implies the possession of sagacity. The term נָחָשׁ (*nachash*) is derived from the verb* נָחַשׁ (*nachash*), to *scrutinize*, to *view attentively*, and in a secondary signification, to *practise augury*. (Compare Gen. xlv. 5, 15; Lev. 19, 26; 1 Kings 20, 33.) The serpents are so remarkable for sharply eyeing objects, that a serpent's eye became a proverb among the Greeks and Romans, who applied it to those who view things *acutely*.

Dr. Clark further remarks: "None of them (serpents) *did* or ever *can* walk erect. The tales we have had of two-footed and four-footed serpents are justly exploded by every judicious naturalist, and are utterly unworthy of credit. The very name *serpent* comes from *serpo*, to creep, and, therefore, to such it could be neither *curse* nor *punishment* to go on their bellies, *i. e.*, to *creep on*, as they had done from their creation, and must do while their race endures."

Dr. Clark ventures here the statement that serpents did always creep upon their bellies from their creation, and strange to say, the only argument he brings forward in support of it is, that the name *serpent* comes from *serpo*, to creep. But the first name of the serpent is נָחָשׁ (*nachash*) which, as we have shown, according to etymological signification, is descriptive of *mental powers*, and not of *form* or *motion*. Even the Greek word *οφίς*, a *serpent*, is, according to etymological writers, derived from *ὀπτομαι*, to *see*.—(See *Martini's Lexic. Etymol. in Draco*.) Of what use is it, then, to bring forward a Latin derivation as an argument when treating upon a Hebrew word?

*Gesenius makes it an "onomatopoetic root," as "expressing a low, hissing sound, to hiss"; but the verb is never used in that sense. There is no ground for such a supposition.

The Doctor seems also to have entirely overlooked the circumstance of the change that must have taken place in the form of the animal, in consequence of the curse pronounced upon him. The language, in verse fourteen, "upon thy belly shalt thou go," clearly implies a change in the external form and motion. To what extent the form of the serpent was altered, it is impossible to say. There is, however, no necessity to adopt the extreme view that the serpent, before the curse, walked erect. But we may well ask, what would the language mean as applied to the monkey tribe? Why, surely they cannot be said to *go on their bellies*. The Doctor says, it may mean *upon all four*, but that is not the case, as it is quite evident from Lev. xi. 42, where both expressions occur: "Whatsoever goeth *על גחון* (*al gachon*) upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth *על ארבע* (*al a'-ba*) upon all four." Even the reader who does not understand Hebrew will see from the original words expressed in English characters, that the two expressions bear not the slightest similarity to one another, and the former expression is precisely the same as is used in Genesis ii. 14.

But further, if נחש (*nachash*) denotes a monkey in Gen. iii. 1, it must have that signification in all other places in the Old Testament where it occurs, which would indeed lead to some very curious results. Thus, for example, Gen. xlix. 17 :

"Dan shall be נחש (*nachash*) a serpent by the way,
A viper in the path.
That biteth the heels of the horses,
So that its rider falleth backward."

Now, what would be the result if we were to adopt Dr. Clark's theory? We would have the incongruity of Dan being in the first line compared to a *monkey*, and in the second, to one of the most *venomous serpents*, thus rendering altogether meaningless the exquisitely beautiful figure which predicts the great cunning that the tribe of Dan will display in repelling the attacks of more powerful enemies. Besides this the ape is not a native of Palestine, it was first brought among the curiosities in natural history by Solomon's ships from Ophir.

I am not aware that Clark's theory has been adopted by any other writer, and no wonder, for whilst every thing argues against it, there is really nothing that could be urged in its favour. Hence, all translators and lexicographers, both ancient and modern, have taken *nashash* to mean a *serpent*.

As *nashash* is the generic term for serpents, it is impossible to say what sort of serpent it was which Satan selected as his agent, but as some of the species are very beautiful, no doubt he chose from the most attractive. St. Basil, in his book of

low, hissing
as no ground

Paradise (p. 627), observes, "it was not a frightful creature as it now is, but mild and gentle." The famous Mr. Mede is of similar opinion. (Discourse 38, p. 291, &c.). And the same opinion is set forth in the writings of some eminent Rabbis.

2. *And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden :*

3. *But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

The plan which the tempter adopted in bringing about the fall of our first parents was most cunningly devised. He approached the woman knowing her to be the weakest of the two, and, therefore more easily persuaded. In addressing her, he commenced with a question as a sure way to draw her into conversation. The question was of such a nature as most likely to elicit an answer, for he insinuated that God had forbidden them to eat of any tree of the garden, though he well knew that was a lie. He is, therefore, appropriately called "a liar, and the father of it." (John viii. 44.)

By the reply, contained in the above two verses, the attack of the tempter is well repulsed. The answer is to the point, it is not as you have insinuated, but on the contrary, we may eat of every tree of the garden, there is but one of which God hath said "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it lest ye die." In the reply Eve adds the words: "neither shall ye touch it," which form no part of the original command, and many writers have supposed that the poison had already commenced to work. Thus Keil and Delitsch, in their Commentary, observe: "She was aware of the prohibition, therefore, and fully understood its meaning; but she added: 'neither shall ye touch it,' and proved by this very exaggeration, that it appeared too stringent even to her, and therefore that her love and confidence towards God were already beginning to waver. Here was the beginning of her fall." (Com. p. 95.) Kalisch remarks: "The answer of the woman bears a certain vehement character, it is exaggerated, it contains the untruth, that God hath forbidden even to touch the fruit of the tree of life; this is the fanaticism of passion and its self-deception; it revolts against the laws and restrictions; it considers them as capricious, conventional fetters, which it is meritorious and noble to break." (Commentary, p. 119.) Other eminent commentators have expressed themselves in a similar manner upon this subject. I must say, that I cannot agree with the views expressed by those commentators. It surely would be inconsistent to suppose that the mere question which the tempter had asked, could have produced an evil influence on the mind of Eve. Her answer shows that such was not the case.

It was with the actual eating of the fruit that the fall began. It was by that act sin entered into the world, and man became mortal. It appears to me more likely that Eve really believed that the prohibition of *eating of it* included also the *touching of it*, as the latter act must have preceded the former, and made use of the expression "neither shall ye touch it," in order to make her reply more emphatic. The reply of Eve, so far from indicating any dissatisfaction with the command, rather shows that she regarded it as merciful and just. God has permitted us to eat of all the trees of the garden: there is but one of which we may not eat. Where is there any injustice or hardship in all this?

4. *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall surely not die.*

The tempter, when he first addressed Eve, made no allusion whatever to the forbidden tree, he carefully left the mentioning of it to her so as not to arouse any suspicion as to his design; but Eve, having now herself spoken of its existence, and the penalty in case they disobeyed the command by eating of its fruit, the wily arch-enemy at once seized the opportunity to persuade her that her fears were groundless, by directly contradicting God: "Ye shall surely not die." The tempter, however, knew well that something more than a mere contradiction of God's declaration would be necessary in order to make the woman swerve from her obedience to God, he, therefore, immediately adds:

5. *For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes will be opened, and ye will be as God, knowing good and evil.*

As much as to say, it is not because the tree possesses any evil properties that God has forbidden you to eat of it; but it is altogether out of selfish motives and envy, for He knows that the moment you eat of it, you will become in every respect His equal. "Your eyes will be open." It is, you will obtain God-like knowledge and wisdom, "knowing good and evil." In the New Testament the expression, opening of the eyes, is also employed in reference to obtaining a higher degree of knowledge and wisdom. Thus Acts xxvi. 18: "To open their eyes, and to turn *them* from darkness to light." In the brief conversation of the tempter with Eve, as given in the sacred narrative, we have exhibited to us a specimen of Satanic audacity which causes one to shudder in contemplating it. It presents to us in the most vivid light his intense animosity towards the human race, and that he does not shrink from adopting the most atrocious means to affect its ruin. He not only insinuated that God had told a direct falsehood, but that

He did so to serve a selfish end. Truly he has most appropriately been called **השטן** (*Hassatan*) *the enemy, i. e., the greatest of all enemies.

"And ye will be as God," in our version rendered, "and ye shall be as Gods." The translators very injudiciously followed here the rendering of the Septuagint, *ὡς θεοί*, and that of the Vulgate, *sicut dii*. Now, it is, no doubt, true, as we have already stated before, that **אלהים** (*Elohim*) is sometimes used to denote the *heathen gods*, but surely it cannot be used in this sense here. What could our first parents in paradise have known of *heathen gods*; long before idolatry began to be practised among men? Nay, even before sin had entered into the world. Onkelos, in his Chaldee Version, still more incorrectly renders **רברבין** (*Ravrevin*) i. e., *princes*, for which there is not only no authority whatever, but renders the passage perfectly meaningless, for what could Adam and Eve have known of princes, when they were then the only human pair in existence? In the Samaritan and Arabic Version, it is rendered by *angels*, so likewise by Eben Ezra, Maimonides, Bishop Patrick, and some other interpreters. This rendering is certainly less objectionable than the renderings "gods" and "princes," for *Elohim* seems sometimes to be used in the sense of *angels*, which is admitted both by many ancient and modern interpreters. As for example Ps. viii. 5:

"Yet thou hast made him but a little lower **מאלהים** (*me'elohim*) than angels,
And hast crowned him with honour and glory."

But the context does not admit even of the rendering, *like angels*, for as we have above stated, the design of the tempter was to make Eve believe that God gave the prohibition out of jealousy to prevent them becoming *like Himself*, so as to render the temptation irresistible. This appears to be the very spirit of the passage. In the Syriac Version it is correctly rendered (*eich eloho*) *like God*. So in the German Version (*wie Gott*) *like God*. And so likewise by Kalisch, Delitzsch, Geddes, Dillmann, Rabbi Hirsch, and, indeed, by most modern translators and critics. So also in the Revised Version, though "gods" is given in the margin, which in this case was unnecessary.

Throughout the preceding chapter God is spoken of by the name **יהוה אלהים** (*Jehovah Elohim*) *Lord God*, but the

* The Hebrew term **שטן** (*Satan*) merely denotes an *enemy*, when used in reference to the *evil spirit* it always has the article prefixed as **השטן** (*Hassatan*) i. e., the enemy.

tempter, in addressing the woman, only used the term אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) God as the name *Jehovah* was too sacred to be uttered by such an *impious being*. It was even too sacred for him to hear it, and therefore the woman, in replying to him, also only makes use of (*Elohim*) God. That this supposition is correct, is evident since in verse eight, where the sacred writer speaks, he again employs (*Jehovah Elohim*) "LORD God."

6. *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes; and a tree desirable to behold, she took of its fruit, and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat.*

"And when the woman saw," the language evidently implies that she gazed with longing eyes at the fruit which awakened in her a desire to eat of it, and made the fruit appear to be "good for food." We need not, therefore, suppose that there was anything in the mere appearance of the fruit which indicated a pleasant taste. Lust makes every thing appear in a favourable light, and hence, as the apostle says: "Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." (James i. 15.) "Pleasant to the eyes." The literal rendering of the original is, "a desire or lust to the eyes." "And a tree desirable to behold." There exists a difficulty in rendering this passage, arising from the verb הִשְׁכִּיל (*haskil*) admitting of the rendering *to behold* and *to make wise*. The former rendering is given in the Septuagint, the Syriac, the Samaritan, the Targum of Ankelos (Chaldee Version), and Vulgate. Also in the German Version of Rabbi Solomon Hakkohen—generally used by the German Jews—where it is rendered "*angenehm zum betrachten*," i. e., "pleasant to behold," and so likewise by Rabbi Hirsch. It is also adopted by many modern commentators and critics, and among them, Gesenius, Tuch, Kalisch, and VonBohlen. The latter rendering is given in our Authorized Version, and Revised Version, also in Luther's German Version, and adopted by many eminent commentators. I have followed in my translation above the rendering of the ancient versions, not that I consider it preferable to the rendering given in our Authorized Version, but merely because by far the greatest number of authorities favour it. Both translations make good sense, the question is, which of the two is best suited to the context? Those who render "desirable to behold," say that the expression נִחְמַד לְהִשְׁכִּיל (*nechmad lehaskil*) is explained by the corresponding phrase נִחְמַד לְמַרְאֶה (*nechmad lemareh*) "pleasant to the sight." (Ch. ii. 9.) I cannot see that there is much force in this argument, the expressions it will be seen are not alike, and the latter expres-

sion is used in reference to *all the trees* in the garden, whilst the former is used in reference to one particular tree. Then again they argue that Eve had no evidence as to the ability of the tree "to make *one* wise," whilst, on the other hand, she had the testimony of her senses as to the attractive qualities of the tree. There is more force in this argument, yet it is by no means conclusive. The tempter told her that by eating of it, their eyes of understanding would be opened, and they would become like God, and the result shows that she believed his words, and thus looked upon the tree as "desirable to make *one* wise. The rendering in the Authorized Version, therefore, is quite as suitable as the other, if indeed not more forcible. "And she gave to her husband with her; and he did eat": it would appear from this language that Adam did not offer any remonstrance, but readily yielded to the persuasion of Eve, and thus the fatal act was consummated which brought misery and death into the world. If we examine the narrative of *the fall*, it becomes soon apparent that the three principal factors in bringing about the dire catastrophe, were, *unbelief*, *lust*, and *pride*, and these have ever since been the chief sources from which all the sins committed by their descendants spring.

7. *And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they adjusted fig-leaves, and made themselves girdles.*

"The eyes of both of them were opened." It is the eyes of their minds, their childlike innocence, had now departed; and different ideas took possession of their minds from those they had before their fall. They knew all the time that they were naked, but in their innocent state they were not ashamed of it, no more than a child before it comes to years of discretion; but now a sense of shame came over them, and they felt it necessary to supply by art a want of which they had not known anything before. The material to supply this want was at hand, they took fig-leaves, and made girdles of them. The rendering of the verb *וַיִּתְּפְרוּ* (*vaiythperu*) by "and they sewed" is not a happy one, for it suggests the use of *needles* or some *implement of sewing*; and sceptics, ever ready to find discrepancies, have pointed to this as one of them, charging the sacred writer with having represented the use of implements of sewing in Paradise which could not have been known yet. But the primary signification of the verb *תָּפַר* (*taphar*) evidently is to *adjust*, and in this sense it is undoubtedly used in Job xvi. 15 *—"Sackcloth *תִּפְרִיתִי* (*tapharti*) I have adjusted upon my skin," strangely rendered in the Authorized Version

* Sackcloth was used for mourning garments.

and Revised Version, "I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin." In Luther's German Version it is rendered (*sie flochten*) i. e., they *plaited*; and so in the German Version of Rabbi Solomon Hakkohen; likewise by Rabbi Hirsch, and many others. After the introduction of needles, the verb received the accessory signification *to sew*. * "Fig-leaves," some writers have understood תאנה (*the'na*) here to denote the *Pisang-tree*, the leaves of which attain the length of from ten to twelve feet, and are about two feet broad, and are still used in Africa by some savage tribes as aprons. (Danish Mission Reports ii. p. 718.) But the Hebrew word is in Scripture only used in the sense of a *fig tree*, which is very common in the East. Probably it was the *ficus Indicus*, which would be well adapted for this purpose, the leaves being large and broad. "And made themselves girdles," rendered in the Authorized Version "aprons," which is altogether too definite a term; the Hebrew word according to its etymology simply denotes a *girdle*, without any reference to shape or form.

8. *And they heard the voice of the LORD God resounding in the garden in the cool of the day: And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

So long as our first parents had remained in their original holy state, the glorious presence of God inspired no fear, for His familiar intercourse with them was like that of a loving father with his obedient and affectionate children. They were yet immortal, and could behold God, and yet live. But having now broken the commandment of God, the voice of conscience awakened them to a sense of the awful sin they had committed; they can no longer bear the presence of God who had done so much for them to make them happy; and they hid themselves among the trees of the garden, in the vain hope of concealing themselves from the all-seeing eye of their offended Creator. We are apt to say if a person has done something wrong, "this man has no conscience," this is a fallacy, it would be more proper to say, "this man has stifled the sense of his conscience," for the same voice that has aroused our first parents to a sense of their guilt, has ever since, and ever will make itself heard after an evil deed done. The evil doer may indeed try to hush that voice, but still it is there. What a beautiful illustration does the Psalmist furnish of this in Psalm x:

"The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God: All his thoughts are There is no God."—v. 4.

* Instead of the singular noun עלה (*aleh*) the plural עלי (*alei*) occurs in some manuscripts, but the singular noun may either be taken as a collective noun, or rendered by foliage.

Here the wicked, in order that he may carry out his evil doings without compunction, persuades himself that there is no God. Let us now turn to verses 10, 11 :

"He crouches, he bows down,
And the poor fall in his strong ones, (i. e., in his strong claws.)
He says in his heart God forgets :
He hides his face, he does not see for ever."

In verse 10 the wicked is compared to a lion lurking in his den for his prey ; but no sooner has he done the deed than his conscience makes him sensible of his guilt, and no longer being able to persuade himself that "there is no God," he flies to the next subterfuge to quiet his troubled conscience by persuading himself, that "God forgets;" that He does not trouble Himself about such things.

"And they heard the voice of the LORD God." This passage has been explained in two different ways. In Scripture *thunder* is sometimes spoken of as "the voice of the LORD," or "the voice of God." Thus, Job xxxvii. 5, it is said: "God thundereth marvellously with his voice." Again Exod. ix. 28, קֶלֶת אֱלֹהִים (*Koloth Elohim*) lit. *voices of God, i. e., thunders*, rendered in our version "mighty thunders." Other striking examples we have in Psalms xxix. 3, and following verses. Is. xxx. 30, 31, and in other places. Hence many commentators take our passage to mean, that, God appeared now to our first parents in a *tempest* accompanied by *thunder* out of which He called unto them, in a similar manner as He addressed Job out of a tempest. (Job xxxvii. 1.) Then, as regards the verb מַתְּחַלֵּךְ (*mithhallech*) rendered in our version by "walking," which is, no doubt, the primary meaning of it, yet when used in connection with קוֹל (*kol*) *voice*, it assumes the signification to *sound* or *resound*. This is quite evident from Exod. xix. 19: "And when the voice of the trumpet הוֹלֵךְ (*holech*) sounded;" and is so rendered in the English Version. There can, therefore, be no objection to render the verb likewise by *resounding* in the passage under consideration.

Many other commentators, however, explain the phrase "voice of the LORD God" to mean the sound made by His footsteps. Thus Kalisch says, "the voice of God walking in the garden is His footsteps," and refers, in support of his rendering, to 1 Kings xiv. 6: "When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet." But in this passage it is distinctly stated that it was the sound of feet. Other writers appeal also to 2 Sam. v. 24, but there also the sound is distinctly stated to be קוֹל צַעְדָּה (*kol tseadah*) lit. "the sound of a going." The first

* The word קוֹל denotes both *voice* and *sound*.

explanation appears to me the more consistent one, and more suitable to the context. In verse 10, Adam says, "I heard thy voice in the garden: and I was afraid;" here the expression "thy voice" can hardly be interpreted merely to mean *the sound of thy footsteps*, in the above quoted passages, it will be seen, the *sound of footsteps* is differently expressed. Further, the expression, "and I was afraid," seems to imply too, that the *voice*, which they heard, was awe-inspiring; and what could have been more so than loud peals of thunder for the first time heard by Adam and his wife?

"In the cool of the day," literally "in the wind of the day." It is in that part of the day when cool breezes blow, which in the East is generally towards evening. It is then that the people generally leave their houses for a walk, or go to some place of assembly, which was generally in the gates of the city. Thus when the two angels came to Sodom at even, Lot was sitting in the gate of the city. (Ch. xix. 1.)

9. *And the Lord God called unto the man, and said to him, Where art thou?*

As God is omnipresent nothing can be hid from His sight. The question, therefore, "Where art thou?" was not asked as if God had been ignorant of Adam's hiding place, but to awaken in him a still deeper sense of his guilt, and to bring him to an humble confession of it. God did not charge Adam at once with his sin, but afforded him an opportunity to repent, and with a contrite heart acknowledge his disobedience. But instead of humbling himself before his offended Creator, he has recourse to the false and miserable subterfuge recorded in the next verse.

10. *And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I am naked; and I hid myself.*

Adam had been naked from the day of his creation, but was not ashamed, he had never before on that account shunned the presence of God. He evidently endeavoured to hide the real cause under a false semblance. This conduct of our first parent shows how naturally crime leads to prevarication and falsehood. Sin invariably debases. Any one committing a wrong act will never hesitate to cover it with a falsehood, in the hope of escaping punishment. The phrase, עירב אנוכי (*eirom anochi*), is more correctly and suitably rendered "I am naked," than "I was naked," as in the English Version and also in the Revised Version. Correctly rendered in the German Version, "*denn ich bin nackt*," for I am naked.

11. *And He said, Who told thee that thou art naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*

The questions in this verse no longer admitted of prevarication. "Who told thee that thou art naked?" It is by what means hast thou found out that thou *art* naked? Hast thou not obtained this knowledge by eating of the tree whereof I commanded thee not to eat? Driven now to give a direct answer, which could only be in the affirmative, he next endeavours to shield himself, by casting the blame upon his wife.

12. *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.*

"The woman whom thou gavest with me." The language which Adam here uses implies more than merely laying the blame upon the woman, it indirectly casts the blame also upon the Almighty who had bestowed her upon him. This conduct of Adam shows the fearful effects of sin. It drives away the fear of God, it loosens all moral obligations, it deadens all natural affections, and rends asunder the holiest ties of relationship. Adam thought of nothing but his own escape from the impending punishment: he cared not what became of the woman of whom he had but lately said, "this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh."

13. *And the LORD God said to the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me.*

The woman could truly say that she had been beguiled, her excuse was therefore more reasonable than that of her husband, who as the apostle Paul declares, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (1 Tim. ii. 14.) Adam was not persuaded into transgression: he ate of the fruit because it was given to him. The narrative does not indicate that he offered the least remonstrance. The woman, however, like her husband, instead of expressing any contrition for her disobedience, seeks to free herself from the blame, by shifting it upon the serpent. Poor and miserable excuses for breaking a command of such a simple nature, which involved neither hardship nor privation in keeping it.

14. *And the LORD God said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed out of all cattle, and out of every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.*

We have seen in the case of the man and woman, God did not charge them at once with their guilt, but offered them an

opportunity to repent and express a heartfelt sorrow for their disobedience. It is, however, different in the case of the serpent: here the sentence is at once pronounced, since the part which he took in bringing about the fall of man admitted of no palliation. "Because thou hast done this," namely as the instrument of the tempter; "thou art cursed out of all cattle," it is separate from all, or as distinguished from all other animals. The Hebrew word מִכְּכֹל (*mikkol*) which I have rendered "out of all" has been rendered in different ways, to which I would call the reader's attention. In our Authorized Version, it is rendered by "above all," namely, "cursed art thou above all cattle," giving the word a comparative force, which from a philological point of view is certainly admissible. But the reader will at once perceive that this rendering would imply, that the curse was pronounced upon all the animals, and that only a heavier curse was to rest upon the serpent, whereas the language in the text clearly indicates that the curse was only pronounced upon the serpent. It is true, the Apostle Paul says that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," (Rom. viii. 22,) but this was because "the whole creation" was made to share the consequences of the disobedience of our first parents. Death and misery came into the world with the eating of the fruit, and in verse seventeen, it is distinctly said, "cursed is the ground for thy sake." Orthodox and heterodox writers are agreed that the other animals had no share in the curse pronounced upon the serpent, and hence most render the word מִכְּכֹל (*mikkol*) among, it is "thou art cursed among all cattle," which makes good sense, but is a very free translation of the word. Some commentators have rendered the word "from all," which is certainly a very literal rendering, but altogether unsuitable here, for the curse did not come from the animals, but from God. Luther, in his German translation, renders *vor allem Vieh*, it is "before all cattle," and so Keil and Delitzsch, in their commentary on Genesis, but this rendering is very ambiguous. The rendering, "out of," which I have given, affords a good sense, and is quite in accordance with the use of the word in other places of Scripture. As for instance Deut. xiv. 2: "And the LORD had chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself מִכְּכֹל (*mikkol*) out of all the nations." "Upon thy belly thou shalt go," as we have already stated, those words clearly imply a great change, though it is impossible even to conjecture as to what extent the external form and motion of the serpent was changed. The creeping upon the belly to which the serpent was doomed, implies also great degradation. "And dust thou shalt eat." These words, of course, must not be understood to mean, that henceforth dust was to constitute its food, they

simply mean, that in consequence of its creeping upon the ground it would necessarily be subjected to swallow dust. And it is worthy of notice, that this state of degradation was even to continue when the Edenic peace and concord will be restored again between man and animals, and among the beasts themselves in the happy time of the Messiah.

“The wolf and lamb shall feed together,
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox ;
But *as for* the serpent dust *shall be* his food.”—Is. lxx. 25.

The expression *eating dust*, according to Scripture usage, has, however, another meaning: it denotes to be reduced to a condition of great shame and humiliation. Thus the prophet Micah, in foretelling the utter overthrow of the nations, says: “They shall lick the dust like a serpent,” that is, they shall be debased and made contemptible. (Micah vii. 17.)

The serpent, although not an accountable creature, and being only employed as the instrument of Satan, was banished according to the same law by which an ox that had injured a person so that he died, was to be put to death. (Exod. xxi. 28.) And the beast which had been made the instrument of an unnatural crime was to be burned as well as the man. (Lev. xx. 15.) It was by this mode of Divine dispensation that God showed in a more forcible manner His detestation of the action.

Whilst sceptic and rationalistic writers and lecturers have had the audacity to pronounce the Mosaic account of the temptation and fall of our first parents as unreasonable and absurd, the narrative on the other hand receives ample attestation—if such were indeed needed—in the widely prevailing serpent-worship among the heathen nations throughout the whole of the globe; not excepting even the savage tribes in the interior of Africa. It is no doubt, from the prominent part which the serpent is represented to have taken in bringing about the fall of man, that the heathens conceived the idea that the animal was the real actor, and thus deified it, and made it the object of worship in various ways. It is said, that no worship is so universal among the heathens over the whole globe as *ophiolatry* (serpent-worship), excepting perhaps that of the sun. Now no mere *tradition* or *invented story* would have obtained such universal acceptance, and been made the object of such wide spread solemn worship. But although the serpent was deified, it was chiefly worshipped as an evil demon, and the religious homage it received was merely for the purpose to avert evil. From the expression “upon thy belly thou shalt go,” the heathens no doubt concluded that before the curse it had walked erect, and thus we find it represented in an erect

position in the sculptural and pictorial representations of the temptation of our first parents. In the temple of Osiris* at Philæ† was found a most remarkable sculpture of high antiquity representing the temptation of our first parents. Eve is seen presenting the fruit to her husband, a tree is between them, and near them stands the serpent in an erect posture.

Baron Humboldt in his work *American Researches*, gives an Azteek hieroglyphical manuscript preserved in the library of the Vatican. On Plate xiii. is "represented the celebrated *serpent woman* Cihuacohuatl, also called Quilaztli, *woman of our flesh*. The Mexicans considered her as the mother of the human race; and after the god of the *celestial Paradise*, Ometeuctli, she held the first rank among the divinities of Anahuac; we see her always represented with a great serpent." (p. 195.) The serpent in the plate, stands in the front of the woman, in an erect position, apparently talking to her. There is no doubt that the group is a representation of the serpent tempting Eve. It is remarkable too, that behind the serpent there are two human figures in the attitude of contending with each other, and Baron Humboldt goes on to say, that "The serpent woman was considered in Mexico as the mother of two twin children; these naked figures are perhaps the children of Cihuacohuatl; they remind us of Cain and Abel of Hebrew tradition." (p. 196.) In the British museum there is an ancient Babylonian seal upon which there are two human figures sitting one on each side of a tree, and holding out their hands, and at the back of one lies stretched out a serpent.

North America furnishes, likewise, proofs of the serpent-worship having at one time formed a part of the religious observances among the aborigines, if, indeed, it is not still practised to some extent among some of the Indian tribes. Squier and Davis, in the "*Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge*," give a representation and description of the *great serpent* of earthwork discovered in Adam's County, Ohio. It is said to be "the most extraordinary earthwork thus far discovered in the West. "Conforming to the curve of the hill," the description goes on to say, "and occupying its very summit, is the serpent, its head resting near the point, and its body winding back for seven hundred feet, in graceful undulations, terminating in a triple coil at the tail. The entire length, if extended, would not be less than one thousand feet. The accompanying plan, laid down from accurate survey, can alone give an adequate conception of the outline of the work, which is clearly and

* *Osiris* (many eyed), a celebrated Egyptian deity, worshipped throughout Egypt, as the son of *Ra*, the sun, and sometimes identified with the sun or the Creator.

† *Philæ*, a celebrated island, situated in the midst of the Nile.

boldly defined, the embankment being upwards of five feet in height by thirty feet in base at the centre of the body, but diminishing somewhat towards the head and tail. The neck of the serpent is stretched out and slightly curved, and its mouth is open wide as if in the act of swallowing or ejecting an oval figure, which rests partially within the distended jaws." The writer then goes on to say: "The serpent, separate or in combination with the circle, egg, or globe, has been a predominant symbol among many primitive nations. It prevailed in Egypt, Greece, and Assyria, and entered widely into the superstitions of the Celts, the Hindoos, and the Chinese. It even penetrated into America; and was conspicuous in the mythology of the ancient Mexicans, among whom its significance does not seem to have differed materially from that which it possessed in the old world. The fact that the ancient Celts, and perhaps other nations of the old continent, erected sacred structures in the form of a serpent, is one of high interest. Of this description was the great temple of Abury, in England, in many respects the most imposing ancient monument of the British islands." (Vol. 1, plate xxxv. pp. 96, 97.) Among the Druids, serpent worship also entered largely into their solemn rites.

It is impossible to account for the origin of this universal religious homage paid to the serpent all over the globe in any other way, than from the prominent part the animal took in bringing about the fall of the parents of the human race, and the consequent evils it entailed upon all mankind.

15. *And I will put enmity between thee and between the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

This verse informs us, that there was to be a perpetual enmity existing between mankind and the whole serpent tribe, and certainly nothing is more notorious than the universal antipathy and aversion, not to say hatred, with which these reptiles are everywhere regarded. And strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless a fact, that although the serpent has been deified among so many heathen nations, it was none the less hated by them. In many of the Eastern religions, the destruction of serpents is enjoined as a sacred duty, and in some instances even solemn sacrifices were instituted for their annihilation. (Frank Vyasa p. 139.) Thus we have the extraordinary spectacle presented to us, that whilst some professed believers in Scripture unblushingly pronounced the Mosaic account of the fall of man as "*unreasonable, childish, and absurd,*" the heathens throughout our globe attest to its verity in every particular.

As Satan, the actual tempter, cannot be separated from the serpent, the instrument in bringing about the fall of our first parents, it follows, therefore, that he must also participate in the curse. The mere constituting of enmity between the serpent tribe and mankind would be a punishment altogether disproportionate for a deed which was productive of such dire results, not only to the human family, but the whole world. Justice, too, demands, that whilst the instrument is punished, the agent should not go free. The language in our verse, therefore, has justly been regarded as conveying a higher meaning, namely, a symbolical prediction of the continued enmity that was to exist between Satan and man, and the final overthrow of Satan's power when the Messiah shall come, who is spoken of under the appellation of *שִׁלּוֹחַ* (*Shiloh*), i. e., *pacifactor*, (Gen. xlix. 10), and *שָׂר שָׁלוֹם* (*Sar Shalom*) i. e., *prince of peace*, (Is. ix. 5), who will, by crushing Satan's head, restore again the original paradisiacal peace and happiness. Hence we read: "And the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. xvi. 20.) As an example of the implacable enmity that exists between Satan and the seed of the woman, the reader may only refer to the first and second chapters of the book of Job. And a writer has well observed that it is "A hatred so deep, so inextinguishable, that never has a single individual of the seed placed his foot within the threshold of heaven, without having suffered from the stings and assaults of Satan by the way. Never has one of that fallen woman's fallen seed passed through the dry and desert land of his pilgrimage, without receiving many a fiery dart, shot from that serpent's brood, who for ever crawl and cluster round his path." "Between thy seed and between her seed." *Seed* is in Scripture often used for *offspring*, "her seed," therefore, denotes her posterity, including of course the Messiah, the greatest of all her descendants. By the seed of the serpent, as applied to the *natural serpent*, is to be understood *the serpent race*, and as we have shown a perpetual and universal enmity exists between it and the human race. And as applied to *Satan*—frequently called *הַנָּחָשׁ הַקָּדְמוֹן* (*hannachash hakkadmon*), i. e., "*the first serpent*," in the Rabbinical writings—we must understand *the children of the devil*, that is, those who are like him in disposition, and thus including the incorrigible depraved and wicked men, called "children of their father the devil." and the evil angels.

The different modes of attack mentioned in our text, necessarily arise from the nature of the combatants. As the serpent crawls in the dust, its head is not only easily crushed, but is at the same time the safest way of attacking, as well as the

easiest and surest mode of destroying it. The serpent, on the contrary can attack that part of man only which is near the ground. Some commentators explain "the heel" being particularly mentioned, as being the least vital part in the human body, where an injury would be attended with less serious consequences than in any other part, in contrast to "the head," which is the most vital part of the serpent. But this argument does not hold good, the bite of a poisonous serpent in the heel would be just as fatal as a bite in any other place, as the poison would soon make its way into the whole system. The word *קֶעַב* (*akev*) *heel*, is evidently here used for *the whole foot*, just like the word *כַּף* (*kaph*) *the hollow or palm of the hand*, is often used for *the whole hand*.

As in Hebrew there is no *neuter gender* the phrase *הוּא יְשׁוּפֶחָהּ* (*hu yeshuphecha*), would be more literally translated "he shall bruise thee," it is the offspring of the woman.

16. *Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children, and to thy husband shall be thy desire, and he shall rule over thee.*

As the woman transgressed before her husband, so sentence is also pronounced upon her before him. The punishment of the woman was twofold, namely, great pain that was to attend childbirth, and subjection to her husband. There is nothing here said of a change from an immortal state to mortality, for that has already been declared in unmistakable language, would be the result of eating from the forbidden tree, "for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The afflictions mentioned in the above verse are additional sorrows that were to attend her throughout life. And so in the sentence passed upon her husband in the following verses. These sorrows were to remind them constantly of the great offence they had committed against their heavenly Father. Yet terrible as the punishment was, it had already been tempered by the promise of the Messiah.

The pain attending childbirth became proverbial among the ancient Hebrews, and hence sometimes employed by the sacred writers to depict great tribulation and anguish. Thus the prophet Isaiah, in his vivid description of the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, in chapters xiii. and xiv., says of the inhabitants :

"And they shall be confounded, pains and pangs shall seize them ;
As a woman in travail, they shall be in pain."—(Ch. xiii. 8.)

Compare also ch. xxi. 3, Mich. iv. 9. "And he shall rule over thee;" I fear that this passage has in too many cases been fear-

fully misconstrued and taken to mean, that the husband may rule over the wife in a tyrannical manner, and subject her to all kinds of ill-treatment. Such an idea can only find a place in a depraved heart, and the whole Bible teaching is against such a monstrous supposition. Throughout Scripture the highest regard is shown for female excellence, and in its pages are found many proofs of the honourable position which the women occupied among the ancient Hebrews. Most of my readers are no doubt acquainted with what the Old Testament relates of the wives of the patriarchs; of Miriam, the sister of Moses; of the prophetess and heroine Deborah; of the wife of Manoah, who was honored even above her husband by having an angelic messenger sent to her with the revelation that God would grant her a son; of the lovely character of Naomi, as set forth in the book of Ruth, a character well according with her name, Naomi, *i. e.*, *pleasantness*; of the meek and pious Hannah; of Michal, the devoted wife of David; of Abigail, the prudent wife of Nabal, and after his death, the wife of David; of the prophetess Huldah (Chuldah), wife of Shalum; of the hospitable Shunamite; of the beautiful Queen Esther, as beautiful in character as in person, and of the many pious women who regularly served in the holy tabernacle. From the honourable notice of these and many other noted women of Scripture we learn the high position women occupied in the social scale among the ancient Israelites. Our text, therefore, cannot consistently be construed to mean anything more than to constitute man the head of the family, to whom the wife should look up to as her protector and counsellor. It is true, in the New Testament, wives are commanded "to submit themselves unto their husbands as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife." (Ephes. v. 22, 23.) But this is far from implying that the husband may domineer over his wife; on the other hand it is also said: "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself." (Ephes. v. 28.)

The degradation of women had its origin in the debasing practices of the heathens. From them it found its way into Mosleism. In our times the ill treatment of women is the result of bad habits and evil influences, and too often, alas! from a greater love for the inebriating cup, than for the wife.

17. *And to the man, He said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.*

We have already stated, that God, from the beginning, ordained that man should not lead an idle life. Immediately after his creation he was placed in the garden "to till it, and

to keep it." But, before man, through sin, had become mortal, and before this curse was pronounced upon the earth, labour was not attended with any hardship or toil. So long as man was immortal, his body was free from weakness, there was no bodily fatigue attending any labour. The earth too yielded its products freely. With the change of immortality to mortality, man became a miserable weak creature, susceptible to all kinds of infirmities; labour, which before his fall, was a pleasure, on account of the changed condition of his body, now becomes a toil. Through the curse pronounced upon the earth, its fruitfulness was impaired, henceforth man was to gain his subsistence only by drudgery, and attended with care and anxiety, so that Job could truly say, "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upwards." The labour and anxiety attending agricultural pursuits ever attest to the verity of the sacred narrative. Yet Jesus, the son of Sirach, says, "Hate not labourious work, neither husbandry, which the Most High had ordained." (Ecclesiasticus vii. 15.) In Hebrew a husbandman is called איש האדמה (*ish haādāmāh*) lit. a man of the ground, it is a man working the ground (See Gen. ix. 20.) The Septuagint and Vulgate Versions, instead "of thy sake," render "in thy labour," it is in thy field labour, they must have read instead בעבירה (*baāvurecha*) בעבירה (*baāvudecha*) which reading occurs also at least in one manuscript, the latter reading evidently originated from mistaking the letter ר (*resh*) r for a ד (*daleth*) d, the two letters being much alike. The present rendering of the Hebrew text is, however, generally adopted by the majority of commentators, and is no doubt the correct one. Most likely the letter was indistinctly written in the manuscript which the Seventy used in making their translation. It is evident that the present reading of the Hebrew text was the prevalent one when the Masorites made the recension of the text, for they generally notice in their marginal notes, if a different reading existed. "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it," it is in wearisome and painful labour shalt thou eat of the produce of the ground. Hence the Psalmist speaks of "bread of sorrows:" it is bread procured by hard labour and anxiety.

18. And thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.

"Thorns and thistles" are employed by the sacred writers to express all kinds of troublesome weeds. Compare Isaiah v. 6; vii. 23. Hosea x. 8. "Thou shalt eat of the herb of the field," we have already stated that the term עשב (*esev*) embraces all kinds of seed-bearing plants between grasses and trees. The

term, *סֹדֶה* (*sadeh*), denotes both cultivated fields and pastures, the meaning of the passage therefore is, that henceforth man should eat of the herb of the field obtained by toilsome labour, for the herbs had already been assigned to man for food in ch. i. 29. The difference consists in that what the earth before yielded freely was now to be extracted from it by toil.

19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returnest unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.*

The Hebrew term *לֶחֶם* (*lechem*) is frequently used for *food in general*; thus Gen. xliii. 31: "And he (Joseph) washed his face and went out, and restrained himself, and said, "Set on food," (Eng. Ver., "set on bread.") It is even used sometimes in reference to animals, as Psalm cxlvii. 9:

"He giveth to the *beast its food;
And to the young ravens which cry."

The passage, "In the sweat of the face shalt thou eat bread," does not refer only to the husbandman, but to all men in whatsoever occupation they may be employed. Hence Job says:

"Is there not appointed thard labour for men upon the earth?
And are not his days like the days of a hireling?"

But after sin had entered the world, the infliction of labour as a punishment was a providential provision to keep man from idleness, the source of all evil, and thus avert greater misery. The man who works for his daily bread, no matter how hard his labour may be, is infinitely more happy than the man who spends his time in idleness and sloth. St. Paul especially admonished the Thessalonians to shun idleness: "For even when we were with you," says the apostle, "this we commanded you, that if any would not work neither should he eat." (2 Thess. iii. 10.)

Many of the Greek and Roman writers speak of the toil and drudgery to which man is doomed, yet, heathens as they were, they recognized the great importance of labour, as calling into activity the mental powers, invigorating the body, and above all as a safeguard from falling into evil habits. See, for instance, Virgil Georg. i. 121-124.

*The word *בְּחֵמָה* (*bechemah*) employed in the above passage, is generally used in reference to domesticated animals, but in the poetical writing likewise in reference to wild animals.

†The word *עֲבָדָה* (*tsava*) employed in the above passage, literally denotes warfare, but is figuratively also used for HARD SERVICE or hard labour.

20. *And the man called his wife's name Eve; for she became the mother of all living.*

In ch. ii. 23, as we have seen, Adam had called his wife **יִשְׁשָׁכָה** (*ishshakah*) *wife*, as indicating the close relationship in which she stood to him, but here he bestows on her the name **חַוָּה** (*chav-wah*), which denotes *life*, indicating her relationship to the whole human family, for as the text says, "she became the mother of all living," not of the Caucasian race only, but "of all living" human beings, irrespective of colour, and formation of the head.

As no child had yet been born to Adam, the name was evidently given in anticipation, having full faith that the promise made in verse 15, that her seed should bruise the serpent's head would be fulfilled. But it may well be asked why introduce it just here, seeing that it has no connection either with what precedes or follows, and the name would certainly have been more appropriately given after the first child had been born? It would seem, that Adam gave the name immediately after the curse was pronounced, to show that the fall and misery it entailed upon them, had in nowise weakened the conjugal affections, but that on the contrary, since the promise of a seed she would in future stand in double relationship to him, as wife and mother of his descendants. The curse too, that henceforth he was to eat his bread in the sweat of his face, would remind him also, that he would have to look to his wife to solace him in his drudgery through life, and as a writer has well said: "The wife was indeed, the only treasure which Adam took with him from Paradise into the desert of life, to remind him of a more than earthly happiness."

The foregoing remarks will, I think, satisfactorily account for the abrupt introduction of the naming of Eve here, instead of in ch. iv. 1.

21. *And the LORD God made to Adam and his wife coats of skins, and clothed them.*

We have already stated that, according to Scripture language, a person that orders or prompts a thing to be done, is said to be the doer of it, and in this sense must the expression, "And the LORD God made," be understood, and not that the Almighty had actually Himself made the garments for our first parents and clothed them. Some of the modern critics, indeed, insist upon taking the words in a literal sense, and ascribe it to the gross and imperfect conceptions which Moses had of the Divine nature. Thus Berger, in his *Practical Introduction* (*Praktische Einleitung*) vol. i. p. 63. Kalisch, too, observes: "Since garments had now become necessary by the aroused

feelings of shame God Himself prepared them, and clothed the first parents." We have precisely the same expression in ch. xxxvii. 3, "And Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* a son of his old age: and he made him a *long coat." Surely no reasonable person would infer from this language that Jacob himself had made the coat, no more than he would infer from history that Wellington had all alone won the battle of Waterloo, because historians ascribe the victory to him. We constantly say, such or such an architect erected this building, yet all he did was merely to direct the work. Why then not allow similar freedom of language to the sacred writers? Why not extend to Scripture the same consistent mode of criticism as is usually extended to secular writings? In reading many of the modern commentaries, one would suppose that the authors had laid aside all consistency in their mode of interpretation. The language in our verse simply means, that God prompted or ordered our first parents to make for themselves garments made of skins and to clothe themselves with them, instead of the fragile girdles of foliage. Garments at once more durable and better adapted to their new occupations and the hardships they would have to encounter outside of Paradise. They were now about to be expelled from their happy home, where misery, pain, and sorrow was unknown, and enter upon their rough journey through life, their bodies needed now more protection than the mere girdles afforded.

Our verse affords another striking example of God's merciful dealings with mankind in prompting them to make for themselves a covering more suitable to their future abode and labour. God had just pronounced sentence upon them for their disobedience, but still kept them under His fatherly care and protection.

"Coats of skins." This implies the killing of animals; and it is, therefore, generally believed, that we have in this verse—although not directly expressed yet implied—the first institution of sacrifice. And, certainly, the closer we examine the subject, the more will the correctness of the supposition become apparent. In the first place we may remark, that it is quite evident, that unless animal sacrifice had been directly instituted by God, no human being could have found out that the shedding of the blood of a beast would be acceptable to God, and make satisfaction for sin. Now in ch. iv. 3, we read: "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering." The sacrifice of animals is here spoken of as if it

*Such long and costly robes were worn as marks of distinction by wealthy or distinguished persons. They are still seen depicted on Egyptian monuments.

had then been already an established ordinance observed in his family. The only reasonable conclusion, therefore, is, that Adam must have received the ordinance of sacrifices by revelation from God.

Secondly, we may observe, inasmuch as according to ch. i. 29, the herbs and fruits were appointed to man for food, *the skins* could not have been of animals slain for food. The grant of animal food was not made until after the flood to Noah's family. It is quite likely that animal food had been used against God's will during the long period before the flood, still it is altogether improbable that Adam killed animals for food whilst in paradise.

Many writers have indeed raised the question whether the institution of sacrifices was of Divine origin, or merely devised by the first family of the human race. Against the idea of its being a human device is, as we have above stated, that no human being would ever have thought of such a thing as that the shedding of blood would be acceptable to God, and make satisfaction for sin. But further, in ch. iv., 3, 4, 5, there is mention made of two different kinds of sacrifices—that of Cain, consisting “of the fruit of the ground,” and that of his brother Abel, consisting “of the firstlings of his flocks.” The sacred narrative tells us that “the LORD had respect unto Abel, and to his offering,” whilst “unto Cain, and to his offering, he had no respect.” Now, upon what possible grounds could this difference be accounted for, if sacrifices were merely of human device? Why should the one, involving the taking of the life of a creature, be more acceptable to God than the harmless offering of the produce of the ground? The answer to this question is furnished in Heb. xi. 4: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain;” this clearly shows that sacrifice is a divinely instituted ordinance, and when properly observed is acceptable to God. Again, in ch. vii. 2, we read: “Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thyself by sevens, the male and his female, and of the beasts that are not clean by twos, the male and his female.” Here, the reader will observe, there is already a distinction made between clean and unclean animals, and the language implies that Noah already knew how to distinguish the clean from the unclean. Now, how did Noah obtain this information? Surely there can be but one reasonable answer to this question, and that is, that when God instituted the ordinance of sacrifice, He at the same time appointed also certain animals to be used. The distinction of animals that were allowed to be eaten and those that were forbidden under the Mosaic law was by direct* command of

* Lev. xi.; Deut. xix. 4, *et seq.*

God, and so, no doubt, was the selection of certain animals to be used for sacrifice.

Of the unclean animals there were to be taken into the ark only one pair of each, but of the clean seven of each, namely, three pairs, and one odd one. Now why the odd one? Evidently for sacrifice. Hence we read ch. viii. 20: "And Noah built an altar unto the LORD, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offering on the altar." The importance and sacredness of sacrifices under the Old Testament dispensation altogether forbids the idea of their being originally of human origin. As from the sons of Noah the whole earth was peopled,* this will account for the offering of sacrifice becoming so universally practised among all the heathen nations over the globe, having been adopted by them from the Hebrews, like many other customs. Among many of the Aborigines of America the dog was a favourite animal for sacrifice, and even to this day the Iroquois offer a white dog at the feast called Gi-ye-wa-ne-us-qua-go-wa, *i. e.*, the original faith, and say, that it was a covenant between the Great Spirit and their forefathers to observe it. And so among all the heathens throughout the world, no matter how far separated from one another, sacrifice was regarded as originally instituted by one or other of their gods.

But I must now pass on to notice another extravagant hypothesis which has been even more widely entertained than the one which we have just been controverting. One too, if persisted in would raise such an insurmountable barrier as to preclude the possibility of harmonizing the teaching of Scripture with the established facts in the science of geology. And when I say "established facts," I wish the reader to understand that I do not mean as asserted by merely a half a dozen of eminent geologists, but by the unanimous voice of *all the greatest scientists* who have ever written on that subject. Now it has been strenuously maintained by many commentators, and thus widely promulgated, that "*death came only into the world with the fall of man,*" or in other words that death had no existence until our first parents sinned in Paradise. If this were the case, how are the fossil remains in the various stratified rocks to be accounted for?

Dr. Kalisch observes: "The innumerable petrifications in the interior of the earth preach with a thousand tongues that organic life was, by myriads of myriads, destroyed during immeasurable ages before the existence of man."† The distinguished geologist, Hugh Miller, says on this subject: "All

* Gen. ix. 19.

† Commentary, p. 130.

geologists agree in holding that the vast geological scale naturally divides into three great parts. There are many lesser divisions—divisions into systems, formations, deposits, beds, strata; but the master divisions, in each of which we find a type of life so unlike that of others, that even the unpractised eye can detect the difference, are simply three—the palæozoic or oldest fossiliferous division, the secondary or middle fossiliferous division, and the tertiary or latest division. In the first or palæozoic division, we find corals, crustaceans, molluscs, fishes, and in its later formation a few reptiles." The middle division he characterizes "as an age of egg-bearing animals, winged and wingless. Its wonderful whales not, however, as now of mammalian, but of reptilian class." "In speaking of the tertiary period he remarks, that it had also its prominent class of existences. Its flora seems to have been no more conspicuous than that of the present time; its reptiles occupy a very subordinate place, but its beasts of the field were by far the most wonderfully developed both in size and numbers, that ever appeared on earth."* These statements of Hugh Miller are attested by all geologists without a single exception. Now the geologists must either have been imposing on the credulity of their millions of intelligent readers, or the hypothesis that "death had no existence before the fall of our first parents must fall to the ground. The teaching of geology, in regard to the existence of the fossil remains, is so well attested, that it admits of no doubt or possibility of being controverted. It is quite possible that some scientists may hold extravagant ideas as to the long periods of time that must have elapsed during their slow and gradual formation, but all geologists—and among them many devout Christians and Jews—are agreed that animals existed and perished many ages before the appearance of man upon the earth. If this then is an indisputable fact, it surely becomes highly important to examine whether the teaching of the Bible is in any way in opposition to the teaching of science in regard to these fossil remains.

The hypothesis of interpreters that "death only entered the world with the fall of man," implies that all animals must have been created *immortal beings* as well as man. Now, we would, indeed, in vain search the whole sacred Scriptures from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelations to find a single passage that ever hints at such a thing, much less teaching it. The whole tenor of the teaching of Scripture is quite the opposite to it. *Man*, like the animals, was formed from the dust of the ground, so far then they stand in

*Hugh Miler's Testimony of the Rocks, pp. 135, 169.

equal relation. How, then, did man become the image and likeness of God? The answer is, that the LORD God after He had "formed man of the dust of the ground, he breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life." It is by the possession of the נשמת חיים (*nishmath chai-yim*) the spirit of life, that man can only be said to be the image of God, and by its possession only he became an immortal being. Thus it is said in the apocryphal book, The Wisdom of Solomon: "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity." It is this possession that forms the grand distinction between man and the animals. Then, again, when God imposed the command upon the man not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the punishment for breaking the commandment was, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"—"thou"—it is not said, *and all the animals*. And hence St. Paul says: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.) The reader will perceive that the apostle only says that "death passed upon all men," and not upon all the other creatures also. Compare also, 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. The Scriptures nowhere declare that the animals had ever been exempt from death. Man alone was created immortal; he sinned, and this brought death upon the human family. The teaching of Scripture is, therefore, in perfect harmony with what science teaches in regard to the fossil remains. But some commentators, in a most reprehensible manner, form very hasty theories without considering them in their various bearings, and frequently have recourse to the most unreasonable arguments in order to sustain them. A most striking proof of this we have in the absurd argument brought forward that the *petrified animals* probably never were *real living beings*, but that they are merely so in appearance. This only shows how pertinaciously some writers will cling to a pet theory, even at the risk of making themselves appear ridiculous in the eyes of every enlightened reader.

The Hebrew word כְּתָנוּת (*kothnoth*), used in our verse, denotes a garment worn by males and females.

22. *And the LORD God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.*

"Behold, man is become like one of us, to know good and evil." Many interpreters have regarded the language in this passage to be ironical, as much as to say, behold what the ambition of man to become like one of us resulted in! See

what his listening to the voice of the tempter ended in, nothing but misery. Before his transgression he knew only what was good, but now he has also by experience become acquainted with evil and its effects. But the use of ironical language on the part of God on such a solemn occasion seems to me altogether out of the question. The meaning of the passage appears to me to be rather that *the man had attempted to become*. Accord-
 ing to a common Hebrew idiom a person is said *to do a thing*, *he merely purposes or attempts to do it*. Thus Gen. xxx. ii. 21, "And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands," but the words "delivered him," as the sequel clearly shows, can only mean that *he resolved to deliver him*. So Exod. viii. 14. (Eng. Vers., v. 18,) "And the magicians did so with their enchantments," but "did so" can only mean *they tried to do so*, for it is immediately afterwards stated, that "they could not." Again in Josh. iv. 9, it is said that "Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel;" but the words "arose and warred" can only mean, that *he purposed or prepared to do so*, for it is nowhere stated in history that Balak had actually fought against Israel. And so by the same idiom the words "man is become," in our verse, may be interpreted that *man attempted to become*. Lured by the tempter's promise, "ye shall be as God," (v. 5), he was no longer satisfied to be created in the image of God, but longed to become equal to God Himself. "And now, lest he put forth his hand," the passage is evidently elliptical. "And now, *care must be taken* lest he put forth his hand." The passage thus completed harmonizes beautifully with the next verse: "Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden." Such elliptical expressions are very common in the Old Testament.

"And take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever," man having been created immortal, the tree of life could impart no more than what he already possessed, he was, therefore, permitted to eat of it as long as he retained immortality by being obedient to the command of God. But he having now through sin become mortal, he could no longer be suffered to remain in the vicinity of "the tree of life," which afforded him the means of regaining again that which he had lost as a penalty of his disobedience. The language, "and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever," clearly implies that the tree of life "was endowed with *supernatural life-sustaining properties*, that it possessed the power to impart to the body *strength and vitality* to preserve it for ever, and therefore the use of the tree was barred, for it still retained its life-sustaining properties. Delitzsch has indeed very properly observed that, "Had he (man) continued in fellowship with God by obedience to the command of God, he might have

eaten of it, for he was created to eternal life. But after he had fallen through sin into the power of death, the fruit which produced immortality could only do him harm. For immortality in a state of sin is not the *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*, which God designed for man, but endless misery which the Scriptures call the second death." Rev. ii. 11, xx. 6, 14, xxi. 8). The expulsion from Paradise, therefore, was a punishment inflicted for man's good, intended whilst exposing him to temporal death, to preserve him from eternal death." This barrier will be removed again, and the tree will again be partaken of, and man will be restored to a glorious immortality. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. ii. 7). Many of the Rabbis also held the opinion, that "after the resurrection men would eat again of the tree of life." There was, however, another reason why our parents could not be suffered to remain any longer in Paradise. The garden which God had planted, was a place of perfect bliss and peace, whereas man henceforth was to eat his daily bread in sorrow, and be subject to sickness and pain. The perfect peace that reigned in the garden was not to be broken by cries of woe, and the agony of death.

23. *Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he had been taken.*

The passage "from whence he had been taken," does not mean as some writers have understood it, that God sent the man outside of the garden from whence he had been brought after his creation, but from which he had been created. The tilling of the ground was constantly to remind him of his earthly origin. The cultivation of the ground was the primary occupation designed for man, but as the human family increased other occupations became necessary, but all attended with toil. Still, on the produce of the ground man's sustenance depends. If the earth does not yield her produce, famine and death would be the natural results. Hence Solomon says: "Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all: the King himself is served by the field."* (Eccl. v. 8, Eng. Ver. verse 9.)

*We may safely say there are few passages in the Scriptures of which so many different renderings and explanations have been given as of the one above quoted. Some of them are very far fetched, whilst others are bordering on the absurd. The rendering above given which is the same as in the Authorized Version, is, in my opinion, the most consistent, and at the same time the most literal rendering of the original. Rabbi Herzfeld, in his Commentary on Ecclesiastes, has given a similar rendering, and so has the celebrated Rabbi Samuel ben Meir; and Rashi, the most esteemed of all the Jewish commentators, has given the following explanation of the passage: "For even if one is a king, one is subject to the field, if the earth yields produce, then he has something to eat, if not, he must die of hunger."

24. *So He drove out the man; and He caused to dwell at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of the sword that turned itself continually, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

In the preceding verse, the sacred writer employed the verb שָׁלַח (*shalach*) which simply signifies *to send*, without carrying with it the idea of displeasure. In this verse which concludes the account of the fall of man and its fearful consequences, he employs the verb גָּרַשׁ (*garash*) *to drive out, to expel*, the use of the stronger language here may probably be accounted for, in order to show God's great displeasure at man's transgression in every way possible, and to the very end of the account of the fall.

"The Cherubim!" The etymology of the Hebrew term כְּרוּבִים (*cherubim*) is doubtful, unless there existed at one time a verb כָּרַב (*carav*) *to draw near*, synonymous to the verb קָרַב (*karav*) *to draw near*, now in use. In that case, these heavenly beings would be so called as drawing near to, or standing before, the throne of God to minister. Such interchanges of letters belonging to the same organs are by no means uncommon. As a striking example of this we may instance the name of a city, דִּיבּוֹן (*Dibon*), situated in the borders of Moab (Isa. xv. 2); but in v. 9 of the same chapter this very city is called *Dimon*. Every Hebrew scholar knows that such interchanges of letters are often met with. As regards what they represented, it is very difficult to decide, for they appear under different forms in Scripture. According to Exod. xxv. 20, each had one face and two wings. In Ezek. i. 5-10 they are represented as having the form of a man, each having four faces, namely, of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle, which some interpreters explain as symbolizing reason, power, strength, and penetration; whilst others regard them as representing love, constancy, magnanimity, and sublimity. The former explanation is the one commonly adopted, and seems to be most plausible. They are also represented as having four wings. In Ezek. xli. 18, 19, the Cherub is described as having two faces, that of a man and a lion. Josephus says that "they resembled no animals ever seen by man, and no one knew their form. (Ant. b. III. ch. vii. par. 5.) In this Josephus is no doubt correct. As the appearance of the cherubim was always symbolical, this will at once account for the different forms which they are in Scripture represented to have assumed. In Exod. xv. 19, 20, it is not stated what the face of the Cherub resembled, but it is generally believed to have been the likeness of man. This is a very reasonable supposition, since the two Cherubim on the ark, with their outstretched wings, symbolized the Divine presence of God, and man being created in the image of God.

We may here draw the reader's attention to Psalm xviii. 11 (Eng. Vers. 10):

"And He rode upon a cherub and did fly,
And moved swiftly on the wings of the wind."

The first clause in this verse must not be taken in a literal sense as representing God riding upon a Cherub. Such an idea would have hardly entered the mind of the Psalmist. The word *Cherub* is here metaphorically employed for *the clouds in a thunderstorm*, which accords with what is said in the second clause, "and he moved swiftly upon the wings of the wind." As the Cherubim are the servants of God, so are also the elements. God is in other places of Scripture represented as riding upon *the clouds*, as Isaiah xix. 1. "Behold the LORD riding upon a swift cloud." Compare also ch. lxvi. 15. Nahum i. 3.

We have here to combat a wide spread notion entertained among many modern writers that Moses took the model of the Cherubim from the Egyptian sphinxes. This is simply absurd. Surely the sacred writer who had received from the mouth of God the commandment, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath," would not himself break the commandment. Besides, Moses was by God Himself directed as to the form of the Cherubim on the mercy-seat, and it is certainly not likely that He would borrow any adornment of His sanctuary from the heathens. Throughout the Mosaic laws the greatest care is taken to prohibit every thing that approaches heathen practices. If, therefore, there exists any resemblance in the Cherubim to the Egyptian sphinxes or the winged bulls of the Assyrians, it is more reasonable to suppose that the heathen nations derived their ideas from Hebrew sources. It is, indeed, surprising to find such a judicious and orthodox writer as Hengstenberg, the great champion in the defence of the authenticity of the Old Testament himself favouring the absurd idea of the Egyptian origin of the Cherubim. He observes: "The affinity of the Cherubim with the Egyptian sphinxes is more doubtful, yet it is so only just so long as we consider the thing merely by itself, and leave out of the account the numerous other points of contact between the Pentateuch and Egypt. If these are taken in view, the similarity is sufficient to warrant here also an alliance." (Egypt and the books of Moses, pp. 161, 162.) And at page 166, he remarks: "We are especially guided to the Egyptian origin of the Cherubim, since of all the people with whom the Israelites in ancient times were closely connected, only among the Egyptians are compound animals found in history." To admit that the

Hebrews adopted anything in their religious services from those of the heathen, would simply make the Scripture to contradict itself. Many of the Mosaic laws as we have shown in Vol. i. pp. 266-271, were instituted to guard against the adoption of heathen practices among the Israelites, and to isolate them as much as possible from the surrounding idolatrous nations. As for instance the commandment, "Neither shall a garment mingled with linen and woollen come upon thee." Or the law, "Thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed." (Lev. xix. 19.) How then will these writers reconcile Scripture laying down such precautionary laws, and at the same time imitating Egyptian and Assyrian sculptured idols in modelling the Cherubim on the mercy seat after them; seeing that such would be a direct violation of the second commandment.

It is surprising how often commentators will jump at conclusions without for a moment considering the fearful consequences that may result from their hasty action. They thereby furnish the opponents of Scripture with weapons, and strengthen their position. No doubt Hengstenberg is an eminent writer, and has done great service in defending the authenticity of the Old Testament, we must, however say, that his "Egyptian references in the Religious Institutions of the Books of Moses," contained in chapter vi., pp. 152-208, are no credit to him.

There is nothing whatever in the passages in which the Cherubim are mentioned which would warrant the conclusion that Moses derived the model of them from the sphinxes*; it is altogether an unfounded supposition.

In our passage in Genesis where they are for the first time spoken of, the form of these beings is not at all specified. But it would appear that the Israelites were well acquainted with it, for when Moses was ordered to make the Cherubim of the Tabernacle, no directions were given or sought how they were to be executed. (See Exod. xxv. 18, 19, 20.) We may therefore, justly conclude that Moses constructed them after the form of the angelic beings that were placed to guard the way to the tree of life. Jamieson supposes that the configuration of the Cherubs was, by the tradition of the patriarchs, handed down from those that were placed before the Paradise. Hence many writers, and among them Mr. Wesley, Dr. Doddridge, and Dr. Mant, consider them as hieroglyphics of the angelic nature. The next passage where the Cherubim are mentioned is 1 Kings vi. 23-27, where it is stated that Solomon made two

* The sphinxes are of the form having the body of a lion and a human head, and supposed to symbolize *wisdom* and *strength*. They are commonly found at the entrance of a temple. In Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions the sphinx bears the name *Neb*, i. e., *lord* and *Akar*, i. e., *intelligence*.

Cherubim of olive wood, and overlaid them with gold. These two differed only from those which Moses made, they being of a much larger size, and only overlaid with gold, whilst the others were of solid gold. Thus in the most holy place in the Temple of Solomon there were four Cherubim, Solomon having added the two for the greater glory and ornamentation of God's house. It will thus be seen that with the exception of each of the Cherubim having two wings, there is nothing whatever to indicate the slightest resemblance to sphinxes which always have the body of a lion.

In the vision of Ezekiel the Cherubim appear each having four symbolical faces, whilst the sphinxes never are seen with more than one head, so here also there can be no comparison drawn. I should not have devoted so much space to the discussion of this subject, had it not been that Hengstenberg, in common with many other commentators, endeavours to prove that in many of the Mosaic institutions may be traced an Egyptian model; and his work, "Egypt and the Books of Moses," having a large circulation.

In speaking of the Cherubim, Dr. Kalisch very properly observes: "Mysterious, as in the Holy of Holies, is their presence before the garden of Eden. Great is the resemblance in both instances, but greater is their difference. An internal connection between them is obvious. They guard, in both cases, an inestimable boon; they are the types of the providence and proximity of God; and they are necessary on account of the sin of man. But the Cherubim of the Paradise are the effects of the alienation of men from God, those on the mercy-seat symbolize their conciliation: the former guard the treasure which is forever denied to man, the latter one which was proclaimed to all nations as their common inheritance; the former are, therefore, armed with a fearful weapon, resembling the terrific flashes of lightning, the others look lovingly down upon the ark, overshadowing it with their protecting wings; the one typifying a covenant destroyed, the others a covenant concluded: and instead of the tree of life, of which the one deprives the human families, the others point to a treasure which is also 'a tree of life to those who cling to it' (Prov. iii. 18); and instead of the life on earth which was lost, a spiritual life, beautifying the heart and gladdening the soul, is promised and granted." (Com. p. 131.)

"And the flame of the sword that turned itself *continually*," that is, a flame assuming the shape of a sword issued from the

*In the Authorized Version they are always called "Cherubims," the addition of the letter *s* is unnecessary as the word already has the Hebrew plural form. The same is the case with the word "Seraphims." In the Revised Version the *s* is very properly omitted.

Cherubim, keeping up a constant rapid motion, and thus struck terror into any one who might attempt to enter the garden. From the rendering in the Authorized Version "and a flaming sword which turned every way," many commentators have supposed that the Cherubim had been armed with flashing swords which they brandished in every direction. Kalisch renders, "the Cherubim, with the flame of the coruscant sword," and explains to mean, a "rapidly turning sword, which thus produces a coruscant brilliancy." But it is hardly consistent to suppose that the Cherubim were armed with flaming or bright swords which they brandished every way. The explanation which I have given appears to me to be the most reasonable one. *A flame of fire* is sometimes spoken of as לשון אש (*leshon esh*) a tongue of fire, from its motion and shape. (See Isa. v, 24.) In the Revised Version the passage is rendered in the same manner as I have rendered it.

The Cherubim being placed to guard the way to the tree of life, shows that the garden was neither destroyed nor removed immediately after the expulsion of Adam and Eve, but as to how long its site remained known to any human being after that, is impossible to say, as the Scriptures are altogether silent on that subject.

In the *Book of Adam it is related, that when Adam and Eve were driven from the garden of Eden, and saw the strange country stretched out before them, they trembled with fear, and sank on the ground weeping bitterly. Then God took pity upon them and sent His word to strengthen them, He said to Adam, Behold, I have ordained days and years upon this earth upon which thou must live. But at the end of

*"The Book of Adam" is originally written in Ethiopic, and is held in great esteem by the churches in the East, especially by the Abyssinian Church, hence it is often called "the Christian book of Adam." In the Syrian Church it bears the name "the Struggle of Adam and Eve," though it is sometimes also called "The Treasure Cave." The book, according to its contents, may be divided into three parts. The first, which occupies more space than the other two parts, treats on the struggles of Adam and Eve from their expulsion from the garden of Eden unto Adam's death. The second part is taken up with the succession of the families in the line of Seth to the death of Noah; and the third part takes in the time to the birth of Christ. The descriptions continued in the second and third parts are very brief. In the first part, much space is taken up with the cunning devices of Satan in his constant endeavours to seduce Adam and Eve. The book is interesting from its containing many ancient traditions, some of which are also mentioned by the Fathers of the Christian Church, and likewise by the Rabbinic writers. Some of these traditions, will even assist in illustrating some passages of Scripture—the meaning of which is at present not clear—if they could be depended upon. We will, however, when an opportunity offers quote some of them, without vouching for their truth, leaving it to the intelligent reader to form his own opinion regarding them. The book was translated from the Ethiopic into German by A. Dillman, Professor in the University of Tübingen, and from which I have taken the above extracts.

those years and days, I will send my word, the same that has created thee, and which thou hast disobeyed, and which has driven thee out of the garden, and when thou didst sink to the ground, did raise thee up, the same will also redeem thee in five and half days. When Adam heard these words and could not understand them, and thought there were only five and a-half days to the end of the world, he wept, and prayed God that He might explain them, then God, in His mercy towards Adam, whom He had created in His likeness, explained to him that *the five and a-half days signify five thousand and five hundred years*, when He would come and redeem him and his seed. God appointed also a cave on the west side of the garden, wherein our first parents were to dwell. This cave is called "the cave of treasures." The book also states that Adam and Eve constantly prayed that God would forgive their sin, and that he would still protect them, and that their prayers were heard, and God shielded them from all danger, and the constant assaults of the devil; that they lived, in this cave, near the garden during the whole of their life, and that Adam was buried in the cave.

CHAPTER IV.

1. *And Adam knew his wife; and she conceived and bare Cain, and said I have gotten a man from the LORD.*

In this verse the history of the human race is advanced a step in the birth of the first child. Deep, indeed, must have been the sorrow of our first parents on being expelled from their happy abode in the garden of Eden, and the drudgery of their daily occupation would constantly remind them of the great treasure they had lost. But now a ray of joy lighted up their gloomy hearts, a son is born to them, and the mother in the gladness of her heart exclaimed: "I have gotten or obtained a man *from the LORD*," and hence the child was called קַיִן (*Kayin*), Cain, *i. e.*, a possession. It became afterwards quite a common practice among the Hebrews to bestow names which are expressive of some particular events. Thus the patriarch יִצְחָק (*Yitschak*), Isaac was so called because

his parents laughed when the divine promise of a son was given them. Isaac called his son Jacob, which denotes a *heel-catcher*, and also a *supplanter*, in reference to his having taken hold of his brother's heel at his birth (Gen. xxv. 26); and also in having supplanted him in his birth-right (Ch. xxvii. 36.)

Simple indeed as the language appears to be in the phrase קניתי איש את יהוה (*kanithi ish eth Jehovah*) rendered in the English Version, "I have gotten a man *from* the LORD," translators have yet been a good deal puzzled in rendering it. The difficulty exists in the preposition *from* not being in the original, and the literal rendering of the passage therefore would be, "I have gotten or obtained a man, the Lord." And so indeed it has been rendered by Luther, in his German Version; by J. A. Osiandri, (Comm. in Pentat. ;) by Seb. Munster; A. Varenii; J. Gernhardi; Seb. Schmidt; (Annotat. super Mosis L. i. ;) and other commentators. Those who adopt this rendering explain it, that Eve on the birth of her son became now so fully persuaded of the truth of the promised seed who should bruise the serpent's head, and although she may not herself see him in person, yet possessing him in faith, the delighted mother gave utterance to the pious and grateful exclamation, "I have gotten a man, the Lord." A somewhat similar rendering is given in the Targum of Jonathan (a Chaldee Version), "I have obtained a man, the angel of Jehovah," i.e., the Messiah, who in the later period of the Jewish Church was spoken of under the appellation of "*angel of the Lord*."

This rendering is objected to on the ground, that the promise in ch. iii. 15 did not convey to our first parents the information that the conqueror of the serpent would be of divine nature, and might be Jehovah. The Apostle Paul, however, furnishes a complete answer to this objection. After having spoken of the faith of the patriarchs, he goes on to say: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*."

In the Septuagint it is rendered διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, *by God*, i. e., by the aid of God; in the Vulgate, "*per Deum*;" in the Targum of Onkelos (Chaldee Version) מִן קֹדֶם (*min Kodam*) *from before*; whilst many modern commentators adopt the rendering "with God," i. e., with His assistance; taking את (*eth*) as the preposition *with*. So the Revised Version. The translators of the Authorized Version evidently have regarded את (*eth*) as a contracted form of מֵאֵת (*meëth*) and have rendered "from the Lord," like Josh. xi. 20, מֵאֵת יְהוָה (*meëth Jehovah*), "from the Lord." This rendering it will be seen is the same

as that given in the Targum of Onkelos, certainly no insignificant authority to follow, and has also been adopted by Saadiah Gaon in his Arabic translation, Piscatoris, Clerici, Dathe, and others. In animated declarations, prepositions are frequently omitted, and this may probably be the reason why the preposition (מִן) *from* is omitted in the passage under consideration.

We have now laid before the reader the different renderings which are given of the passage, and he can exercise his own judgment as to which he thinks the best. As far as the language is concerned, no one would for a moment hesitate to translate "I have gotten a man the LORD." The difficulty altogether exists in the application of it. If the reader, therefore, thinks the explanation which we have above given in every respect satisfactory, there is no other reason why he should not adopt it.

2. *And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

The name Abel, the Hebrew form of which is הֶבֶל (*Hevel*) denotes a *breath*, also *vanity*, something that passes swiftly away, or is worthless. Thus Job speaks of his life "for my days are הֶבֶל (*hevel*) a breath."—(Job vii. 16.) And the Psalmist says, "verily every man in his best estate is altogether הֶבֶל (*hevel*) a breath (or vapour)."—(Ps. xxxix. 6, Eng. Ver. v. 5.)

The sacred writer does not, in this case, assign any reason why this name was bestowed upon the second son of Adam, but the name is evidently of prophetic import, the parents probably having been guided to give him this name in reference to his premature death.

We have other instances of this kind in Scripture of names which are apparently of prophetic significance. As, for example, the name of the patriarch אִיּוֹב (*Iyov*) Job, which denotes *one persecuted*, in reference to his trial and sufferings. So שָׂאוּל (*Sha-ul*) Saul, *i. e.*, *asked for*, the name of the first king of the Israelites, being demanded as king.

"And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground," the eldest son naturally adopted the occupation of his father, whilst the next important occupation; that of tending the flocks was adopted by the younger brother. The Hebrew word צֹאן (*tson*), rendered in the English Version *sheep*, includes also goats.

3. *And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the LORD.*

4. *And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and his offering.*

We have already shown that the ordinance of sacrifice most likely had its origin in the garden of Eden, and no doubt Adam after his expulsion strictly observed this rite. His two sons, following the practice of their father, also bring an offering to the LORD. It is impossible to gather from the statement in the text, or from the context how old they were when they performed this pious act, or on what occasion these offerings had been made. The literal rendering of the phrase *ויהי מקץ ימים* (*waihi mikkets yamim*) is, "And it came to pass at the end of days." The word "days" is often used to express an indefinite space of time. Sometimes, however, "days" is used in Scripture to express precisely a year, *i. e.*, a year of days, hence we have the expression *זבח ימים* (*sevach yamim*), not a sacrifice of days, but "a yearly sacrifice"; *ימים ימימה* (*yamim yamimah*) not from days to days but "from year to year."*—(1. Sam. ii. 19.) According to this idiom, our passage might be rendered "at the end of the year,"† and may refer to a yearly feast of ingathering which is at the end of the year, and which was afterwards under the Mosaic law to be regularly observed. (Compare Exod. xxiii. 16.) According to the most eminent commentators it was such a harvest feast which the sons of Job celebrated when Satan brought the dire calamities upon them.

"Of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat," many have explained this, "from the choicest and the best"; but it is better to take *בכורות* (*bechoroth*) in its literal sense *first-born*, which God afterwards by express law set apart for Himself. "And of their fat," it is, of the best of the firstlings. The Hebrew word *חלב* (*chelev*) *fat*, is frequently in Scripture employed metaphorically in the sense of *the best or choicest* portion of anything, hence we have so frequently the expression "the fat of the land," *i. e.*, the best productions of the land. Abel's offering, therefore, consisted of the first-born of the flock, and the very best of them. He was not satisfied to take

*The Hebrew student will have to bear in mind this idiomatic use of *ימים* (*yamim*), or he will find some difficulty in making sense of some passages. See, for example, Lev. xxv. 29; Judg. xvii. 10; 1 Sam. xxvii. 7; Isa. xxxii. 10, &c.

†The same rendering was adopted by the eminent commentators Eben Ezra, Rosenmüller, Von Bohlen, and many other modern writers.

מקץ (*mikkets*) "at the end," the preposition *ב* is frequently used to point out the time at which an event takes place, and then takes the signification of *at*. See again ch. viii. 6, "And it came to pass *מקץ* (*mikkets*) at the end of forty days."

the first that came handy, but selected the choicest. This action of Abel shows his sincerity in performing this religious rite, and his desire to please God, setting an example worthy of imitation.

It is also worthy of notice here, that the offering which Abel brought is precisely the same kind which God, centuries afterwards, by express law, appropriated to Himself. Abel, in bringing "of the firstlings of his flock," must have been well aware, that this kind of offering is especially pleasing to God, for it is altogether out of the question to have merely occurred by chance. How, then, did Abel obtain this information? We can come to no other conclusion than that it was communicated to him by God Himself. And this affords a conclusive proof, that although God did expel our first parents from Paradise, His close intercourse with them did not cease, but that He still made known unto them His Divine will, and taught them the way in which they should walk.*

The offerings of the two brothers, although of different kinds, are here both spoken of under the term *מִנְחָה* (*minchah*), but after the institution of the different kinds of sacrifices under the Mosaic law, this term was restricted to *bloodless* sacrifices, consisting of flour, cakes, with oil and frankincense, a small portion of which was burned upon the altar, and the remainder went to Aaron and his sons. (See Lev. ii. 1, *et seq.*) In the English Version this offering is generally called "meat offering," which is not an appropriate name for it now, though it may have been so when that version was executed; *meal-offering* would be more suitable, and I perceive in the Revised Version *meal-offering* is given, "And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering." This must have been shown by some visible sign, for, as Jerome very properly remarks: "How could Cain have known that God accepted Abel's offering, and rejected his own"? He, therefore, favours Theodotion's free translation, who renders, "and set on fire." Many Jewish and Christian commentators also favour the supposition, that Abel's offering was consumed by a supernatural fire sent from heaven. In whatever manner God's favourable reception was indicated, it must have been by some visible sign, readily understood by both brothers. The Hebrew text throws no light upon it, as the verb *שָׁאַח* (*sha'ah*) only signifies *to look with favour, to respect*.

5. *But unto Cain, and his offering, He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*

As the sacred writer does not state any reason why Cain's sacrifice was rejected, whilst that of his brother was accepted,

*In the Book of Adam, frequent mention is made of God conversing with Adam and instructing him after his expulsion from Paradise.

commentators have indulged in various conjectures. The Talmudical writers ascribe the rejection of Cain's offering to his having acted in a selfish manner, not having offered the *very best* of the produce. They compare him to a faithless servant, who keeps the best of the produce for himself, and hands the inferior kinds over to his master. The more favourite explanation among modern commentators is, that by the rejection of Cain's offering God intended to show that animal sacrifice was more acceptable, than the bloodless offering. Hoffmann conjectures that Cain merely offered thanks for the preservation of the present life, whilst Abel offered thanks for the forgiveness of sin. The Apostle Paul, however, tells us that it was, "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous." (Heb. xi. 4.) And the context also clearly indicates that the fault did not lie with Cain's offering, but with the state of his heart. God delights more in obedience than in sacrifices. "And his countenance fell," an unusual expression, and we believe occurs only here and the next verse. It imports something more than ordinary *sadness* or *dejection*. It was the result of a fierce anger—as the original has it—being kindled in his heart, which showed itself in his countenance by assuming a sullen and malignant impression, and at last culminated in the murder of his brother. Ordinary *sadness* is differently expressed, as for instance in the case of the butler and baker in the morning after their dream, "and Joseph came unto them in the morning, and saw them, and, behold, they were זעפִים (*zoäphim*) *sad*." And Joseph asked them "wherefore *are* your faces רעים (*raim*) *sad to-day*?"—(Gen. xl. 5, 6.) See also Neh. ii. 2, 3.

6. *And the LORD said unto Cain, why art thou angry? and why is thy countenance fallen?*

7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and unto thee is his desire; but thou shalt rule over him.*

The more literal rendering of the first part of verse 7 is, "Is it not, if thou doest well, *there is* acceptance or a lifting, up." This passage clearly indicates that Cain had not been acting well, and, therefore, his sacrifice was not accepted. It teaches also, that mere outward services are not pleasing to God if the heart is not in a proper state. The Scriptures, from beginning to end, teach that sacrifices without righteousness are of no avail. "And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," it is, but if thou art not well disposed and perseverest in

wrong doing, then "sin" will always be at hand to entice thee to still further transgression and acts of iniquity.

As the noun חַטָּאת (*chattath*) signifies both *sin* and *sin offering*, many commentators, without due regard to grammatical construction, have rendered "a sin offering lieth at the door," as much as to say, that if thou doest not well, is there not a sin offering always at hand to which thou mayest have recourse. So, for instance, the Rev. Henry Blunt, in his "Family Exposition," explains, "if thou art conscious of harboring these revengeful and wicked thoughts, there is a sin offering at hand, a way of acceptance is yet open; the sacrifice which I have myself appointed." (American Edit. p. 68.) But the rendering *sin offering* is not admissible, for the feminine noun חַטָּאת (*chattath*) is here construed with the masculine verb רָבַץ (*rovets*) *lieth*. The use of the masculine verb, as well as the masculine pronouns תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ (*teshukatho*) *his desire*, and בּוֹ (*bo*) *over him*, show that "sin" is here personified as the *enemy* who, by the agency of the "serpent," enticed our first parents to sin, and is here represented as lying in wait at the door of the human heart, watching for an opportunity to ensnare his victim*. The eagerness of the *enemy* to make man sin, is expressed in very forcible language, "and unto thee is תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ† (*teshukatho*) *his desire*, but more literally "his running after." Satan does not wait until his victims come to him, he *runs after* them. Now, the very idea of running after a thing implies an anxiety to possess it. Thus Satan ran after our first parents, and so he will continue to do until the Messiah shall crush the serpent's head.

"But thou shalt rule over him," it is, by the grace of God power is given to thee to withstand the assaults of Satan. The most eminent modern Jewish and Christian commentators take *sin* in our passage as personification of the *enemy* lying in wait to assault man, and, no doubt, it is the only interpretation that the language will admit of.

*The masculine verb and masculine pronouns, do not agree with the feminine form of חַטָּאת (*chattath*), but with the subject personified by it, namely, the enemy. So Milton writes:

"——— The Thunder
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shaft.—*Paradise Lost*, I. 154.

The Poet just before had called the Hail and Thunder, God's *Ministers of Vengeance*, and so personified them, he therefore says: "his shafts," instead of *its shafts*, otherwise he would have destroyed his own figure.

†From the root שָׁרַק (*shuk*) to run after.

8. *And Cain spoke with Abel his brother ; and it came to pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*

The first part of this verse has proved not a little perplexing to commentators both in rendering and explaining it. The passage literally rendered reads : " And Cain said unto Abel his brother," but as it is not stated in the narrative what Abel did say, it leaves the passage imperfect and altogether unconnected with what follows. Hence in the Samaritan codex, and in the Septuagint, the phrase " let us go into the field " is supplied, which has also been adopted in the Jerusalem Targum, the Syriac and Vulgate Versions. The passage thus filled up would read : " And Cain said unto Abel his brother, *let us go into the field.* And it came to pass when they were in the field," &c., which renders the passage very clear. In some Hebrew copies, too, a blank space is left, to indicate that something had been omitted or had dropped out of the text. But as the words **נלכח השדה** (*nelechah hassadeh*) "*let us go into the field,*" do not occur in a single Hebrew manuscript, and were apparently unknown to Onkelos, the author of the Chaldee Version of the Pentateuch, and to Origen, Symmachus, and Theodotion, most modern critics and commentators have very properly hesitated to accept them as genuine, and sought to remove the obscurity of the passage in a more satisfactory manner. The verb **אמר*** (*amar*) in our verse, is evidently used in an absolute sense like the verb **דבר** (*davar*) to *speak* with some person, and the passage, " And Cain spoke with Abel his brother," may then be explained, that Cain pretended to be on friendly terms with his brother, conversing with him as familiarly as if he cherished no ill feelings towards him, in order to hide his murderous design until a favourable opportunity should arrive to carry it out. This opportunity occurred at one time when they were together in the field. There are several similar treacherous designs recorded in Scripture. Thus, Joab, the generalissimo of David's army, took Abner aside in the gate on the ²⁹ speak with him quietly, and then killed him. (2 Sam. iii. 30.) So Absalom invited Amnon to a great ³⁰ feast who attended among the other princes, ³¹ and was ³² slain by Absalom's servants. (2 Sam. xiii. 26-29.)

It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the great anguish of our first parents on beholding the lifeless body of their son

* The verb **אמר** (*amar*) is again used in the sense to *speak* Exod. xix. 25, " And Moses went down to the people **ויאמר** (*vai-yomer*) and spake unto them." So also 2 Chron. xxxii. 24, " In those days Hezekiah was sick even unto death, and he prayed unto the LORD : **ויאמר** (*vai-yomer*) and He spoke to him, and He gave to him a sign."

Abel, the first victim to death which was brought into the world by their disobedience to God's commandment. And how greatly must this anguish have been intensified at the thought that the death was brought about by his own brother. And yet, in their deep affliction they had still the consolation that he died "the death of the righteous," and as a writer has well observed: "He was the first of the noble army of martyrs, the first of human kind who entered the abodes of the blessed."

9. *And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?*

We may here draw the reader's attention to the frequent repetition of the words, "his brother," in the narrative. In verse two we read, "she again bare his brother Abel;" in verse eight, "Cain talked with Abel his brother," and again in the same verse, that "Cain rose up against Abel his brother;" and in the verse before us, "Where is Abel thy brother?" By this frequent repetition the sacred writer evidently designed to set forth in a marked manner the enormity of the crime. To show that the most tender ties of close relationship which should be characterized by mutual love and affection were wantonly and pitilessly rent assunder. "Where is Abel thy brother?" Here, like in the case of Adam, ch. iii. 9, God does not directly charge Cain with the crime he had committed, but simply puts a question, to arouse him to a sense of his guilt, and afford him an opportunity to repent, and express a heartfelt contrition for the awful crime. In both cases, in accordance with the strictest justice God affords the culprits the opportunity to plead their own cause, and say what they could in extenuation of their conduct. But in both cases the opportunity afforded them to repent was disregarded, and so far from awakening them to a sense of their guilt, on the contrary Adam answered the question by making a miserable excuse that he was ashamed not of his conduct, but because he was naked, whilst Cain answered the question, by a direct lie, and insolence; "I know not; *am* I my brother's keeper?" The reply of Cain shows what a hardened sinner he must have been, that he indeed "was of that wicked one," and that "his works were evil," (John iii. 12). He meets God's question not only with a barefaced falsehood, but, in addition, impiously uses language which implies that God had no right to put such a question to him: "*Am* I my brother's keeper?" Were it not that these words were recorded, one could hardly conceive it possible for a miserable creature of the dust to have the audacity to address such language to the omniscient God.

10. *And He said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*

God is indeed, "ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness," (Neh. ix. 17). Notwithstanding the impious language of Cain, He takes no notice of it, but gives the sinner another opportunity to confess his guilt and repent; therefore He puts another question to him, "What hast thou done?" The putting of the question implies that an answer was expected. But Cain expressed no contrition for what he had done, and God now charges him with his crime, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me," as much as to say, although thou hast silenced the voice of thy brother, yet his blood crieth unto me out of the ground for vengeance. In the original, instead of the singular "blood," the word is in the plural, דָּמִים (*damim*), "bloods;" and so the verb צָעֲקִים (*tsoäkim*), "are crying." The plural noun is generally used in reference to blood shed unnaturally, and it is only such blood which cries for vengeance. Hence the murderer is spoken of as אִישׁ דָּמִים (*ish damim*), lit., *a man of bloods*, i. e., *bloody man* (Ps. v. 7). Onkelos, in his Chaldee version, ingeniously interprets the passage: "The voice of the bloods of the generations which would have proceeded from thy brother."

11. *And now art thou cursed from the ground, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.*

The first part of the verse is elliptical, "And now *because thou hast done this thing*, art thou cursed from the ground," it is, as far as the ground is concerned which thou hast been tilling. Hitherto the ground had befriended him by yielding its produce without stint, henceforth it shall withhold its strength, and thus become the instrument of punishment, because it was obliged to drink the innocent blood. The next verse describes more fully the punishment.

12. *When thou tillest the ground it shall no longer yield to thee her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be on the earth.*

In the sentence pronounced upon Adam (ch. iii. 17, 18, 19,) the ground was also cursed, but only to the extent that it shall involve hard labour in tilling it, and that the occupation should also be attended with disappointment, by the ground bringing forth thorns and thistles. In the punishment of Cain, the very strength was withdrawn from the ground, so that the soil was rendered powerless to yield its produce for him. Instead of the peaceful and honourable occupation of husbandry, he was henceforth to be "a fugitive and a wanderer," homeless,

friendless, obtaining his subsistence as best he could. His native country the ground of which he stained with human blood "spued" him out, just as the land of Canaan spued out the Canaanites on account of their "abominations," (Lev. xviii. 27, 28.) The words נַעַר וָנָדָד (*na wanad*) rendered in the English Version, "a fugitive and a vagabond," are merely two synonymous terms denoting a *fugitive and wanderer*. The expression implies also an inward restlessness and fear which seize the murderer and chase him from place to place.

"A man oppressed with life's blood
Fleeth to the pit, let them not detain him."

(Prov. xxviii. 17.)

It is, a man oppressed with a sense of guilt of having shed life's blood, finds no rest until death gives him relief in the grave: "Let them not detain him," i.e., let no one shield the murderer from receiving his merited punishment, or assist him to allay his inward restlessness.

13. *And Cain said to the LORD, my punishment is greater than I can bear.* (Lit., "than can be borne.")

As the primary signification of עָוֹן (*awon*) is *iniquity* or *sin*, the latter part of the verse admits of being rendered either: "My sin is greater than can be borne," or "greater than can be forgiven." Luther, following the ancient versions, adopted the latter rendering in his German version, whilst some of the Jewish and modern Christian commentators either favour one or the other. But both these renderings would imply that Cain all at once became overpowered with the consciousness of the enormity of his crime, whilst his language in the next verse clearly shows, that it was not the enormity of the crime that troubled him, but the severity of the punishment. He began now to stand in dread of losing his own life, no doubt thinking as he had slain his brother without any provocation, any one meeting him in his wanderings might serve him in the same way, "every one that findeth me will slay me;" it was this that was uppermost in his mind, and not contrition for his guilt. The rendering, therefore, which we have given, and which is the same as in the English version, is, no doubt, the correct one, and is now very generally adopted by commentators. Although the noun עָוֹן (*awon*) primarily denotes *iniquity* or *sin*, it is sometimes, however, used to express also what is the result of sin, namely, *punishment*. Thus, for example, 1 Sam. xxviii. 10, "As the LORD liveth there shall no עָוֹן (*awon*) punishment happen to thee for this thing," (compare also Is. v. 18).

14. *Behold, Thou drivest me out this day from the face of the ground, and from Thy face shall I be hid ; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth ; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

Cain, in this verse, enumerates the circumstances which combine to make his punishment intolerable, evidently in the hope of having it rendered less severe. But there is not the slightest trace of contrition in his language. The fear "*that every one that findeth me shall slay me,*" seems to engross all his thoughts. "From the face of the ground," it is from Eden, the region where he had been carrying on his agricultural pursuits, and where his family had been dwelling after the expulsion from Paradise. "And from Thy face shall I be hid," as God is omnipresent, Cain could not be hid from the presence of God, for, as the Psalmist says,

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
And whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend into the heavens thou art there :
And if I spread *my bed* in Hades, behold thou art there :
If I take the wings of the morning,*
And dwell in the uttermost part of the sea.
Even there thy hand shall lead me, (*i. e., sustains me*),
And thy right hand shall hold me."—*Ps. cxxxix. 7-10.*

The expression, "and from thy face I shall be hid," can therefore mean nothing else, than that God would no longer lift up the light of His countenance upon him, and vouchsafe him protection. We have already remarked that God did not cease his familiar intercourse with our first parents after they had been driven from the garden of Eden, but still walked among them, instructing, and guiding them, and extending to them His paternal care. But Cain, having sinned and not repented, God withdrew His presence and all the benefits arising with it from him, for there can be no intercourse between God and the sinner. "Every one that findeth me shall slay me." Here the question has often been asked: "And whom had Cain to fear, as there existed no person but his father and mother?" Josephus says, "When he was afraid, that in his wandering about he should fall among wild beasts, and by that means perish, God bids him not to entertain such a melancholy suspicion, and to go over all the earth without fear of what mischief he might suffer from wild beasts." (*Ant. b. 1 ch. 2, par. 2.*) The idea that Cain expressed here a fear of wild animals is also adopted by the celebrated commentators Kimchi, J. D. Michaelis, and some other writers. The language

* "Wings of the morning," *i. e.,* of the morning dawn; expressive of rapid motion; there is nothing swifter than the spreading of the morning dawn from one end of the heaven to the other.

in the next verse, however, altogether precludes the idea of a reference to wild beasts, "whosoever slayeth Cain vengeance shall be taken sevenfold, would be meaningless as applied to animals. The true explanation no doubt is—and the one which is generally adopted—that Adam had other children besides those mentioned. Thus, in verse 17, Cain's wife is alluded to, though there has not yet any mention been made of the birth of any daughter. (Compare also ch. v 4.) The human family would thus soon increase by the birth of grandsons and great-grandsons, any one of whom might consider it his duty to avenge Abel's blood. It is still a common saying among the Orientals, if any one has committed a murder: "Ah, all men will kill that murderer," it is, every one desires to have the murderer punished.

15. *And the Lord said to him, therefore, whosoever slayeth Cain vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD gave a sign to Cain, lest any one finding him should kill him.* (Or more literally, "so as not to slay him, any one finding him.")

In the Septuagint, and in several other ancient versions, לֹכֶן (*lachen*) is rendered *οὐχ οὐτως*, not so; and so in the Vulgate and by some modern commentators; they have regarded the word as a contraction for לֹא כֵן (*lo chen*) not so, for which, however, there is no authority, nor any necessity. "Therefore," namely, because there is some reason in Cain's complaint, "whosoever slayeth Cain vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold;" it is Cain shall be avenged sevenfold. The number *seven* being a holy number among the Jews, hence this number is sometimes used to express an indefinitely large number; "sevenfold" is therefore often used in Scripture in the sense of *manifold*. The number *seven* appears also frequently in connection with religious rites: the seventh day is set apart to be kept holy; the seventh year is the Sabbath of the fields (Exod. xiii. 11); seven times seven years constituted the jubilee, when the property reverted again to its original owner (Lev. xxv. 8 *et seq.*); the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days, and seven weeks were numbered between these two feasts; after full seven days from the birth the rite of circumcision was performed; seven times the blood was sprinkled; seven days lasted the marriage feast (Jud. xiv. 12); and seven days lasted the mourning for the dead (Gen. l. 10), &c. The use of "sevenfold" imparts, therefore, certain solemnity to the menace. "And the Lord gave אוֹת (*oth*) a sign to Cain," that is, God vouchsafed Cain a miraculous attestation to assure him that the promise made to him would be literally fulfilled: and what could possibly inspire him with greater confidence than a

miraculous attestation? It at once afforded to Cain a visible demonstration of the power of God, and thus convinced him that he who is capable of performing such a wonder, is likewise able to protect and to punish.

We find several similar instances recorded in Scripture where miracles were given as assurances of the certain fulfilment of Divine promises. In this manner Moses was assured that his mission into Egypt would be successful by his rod being changed into a serpent, and again the serpent into a rod; and by his hand becoming leprous as snow, and again restored to its natural flesh. (Exod. iv. 1-7). So Hezekiah received a miraculous attestation that he would recover from his sickness, and that he would be delivered from the King of Assyria: "And this *shall be* אֹתָהּ (*oth*) as a sign unto thee from the LORD that the LORD will do this thing that he had spoken: Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees by which degrees it was gone down," (Is. xxviii. 7, 8). It will be seen that in this passage the Hebrew word for "sign" is precisely the same as that employed in our passage. In the English version it is rendered: "And the LORD set a mark upon Cain," this rendering has given rise to the wildest conjectures.

It generally has been understood that God placed some kind of mark upon Cain which was to serve as a kind of protection against harm from those who might seek to take vengeance upon him. Indeed, so strongly has this idea taken hold of the English mind, that it has become quite proverbial to say, "he bears the mark of Cain." Some writers have even gone so far as to suggest, that it was "a horn on the forehead," others, "a distorted face," and others again, "one of the letters of the sacred name יהוה (*Jehovah*.) The absurdity of the notion of any mark having been placed upon Cain will at once become apparent, when we take into consideration that the meaning of such a mark could not possibly have been known to those who met him; nay, more, it might even have acted against him. The sacred narrative in this case does not inform us what the miraculous attestation consisted of, the context, however, shows that it seems to have had the effect of quieting his fears, and that he did not shun the society of man, for we find him afterwards building a city in the land of his exile, which implies the forming of social ties and friendly intercourse. Josephus relates, that Cain "did not accept his punishment in order to amendment, but to increase his wickedness; for he only aimed to procure everything that was for his own bodily pleasure, though it obliged him to be injurious to his neighbours. He augmented his household substance with much wealth by

rapine and violence; he excited his acquaintance to procure pleasures by spoils and robbery, and become a great leader of men into wicked courses."—(Ant. b. 1 ch. 2 par. 2.) Josephus must have obtained all this information from tradition. His descendants, however, became certainly celebrated for their ingenuity and skill in the arts of social life.

We are asked, how can we reconcile the Divine clemency extended to the murderer, with the direct Divine law, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."—(ch. ix. 6.) To this question it is sufficient to reply, inasmuch as God's dealings with man are always characterized by the strictest justice, though they may not always be comprehensible to our finite understanding, we may rest assured, that the mercy shown to Cain was likewise in accordance with the strictest justice. As the sacred narrative affords no information on this point, any explanation that may be offered must necessarily be mere conjecture. Still it appears to us that the precaution against vengeance being taken upon Cain, was intended to guard against the abuse of blood-revenge, which in the early history of man, among an untutored people, might have been productive of the most fearful results.

The blood avenger, under the influence of passion, does not stay to investigate whether the murder has been wilful or justifiable. He may follow mere report, but how often does report prove false when a murder is first found out? He is determined to avenge the blood of a relative, and allows nothing to hinder him. Among the Caribs, one of the five tribes inhabiting Guiana, among whom the practice of blood revenge also existed, though they had not the least connection with the Hebrews and Arabians, it gave rise to long and fearful family feuds. (Labat's Voyages.) Even among the civilized Arabians blood revenge was abused to a most fearful extent. As an example we mention the revenge taken by Muharrik, a king of Hirta—who lived a little before Mahommed's time—on the Temanites, a people on the east of Jelumea for having killed his brother. He vowed he would burn 100 Temanites alive. Whilst engaged in carrying out this barbarous deed, a Temanite observing the fire from afar, and imagining that a feast was preparing, and according to the freedom allowed by the custom of the Arabians on such an occasion, determined to share it as a guest. When he had arrived on the spot the king asked him who he was, and on learning that he was a Temanite, though as a rule a guest although not invited is sacredly protected from harm, he ordered him to be cast into the fire, and as an excuse for his atrocity he said he found a Temanite wanting to make up the number he had vowed. (Arab Crest. p. 107.)

The Almighty, in His infinite mercy, spared the life of the first murderer to afford him an opportunity to repent, and that he may teach his children from his own sad experience, the fearful consequences of sinning against God. From the severe punishment with which any one slaying Cain was to be visited, we may learn that it was not the will of God at the beginning that men should take the avenging of blood in their own hands, "vengeance and recompense" belong to God. (Deut. xxxii. 35.)

16. *And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, in the east of Eden.*

"And dwelt in the land of Nod," that is, in the land of his wandering, or exile. The name "Nod" is not the geographical name of any particular country or region, as some writers have supposed, but was so called from Cain being a fugitive in it. The Hebrew term נֹדֶד (*Nod*), is derived from the root נָדָה (*nud*) to wander, to be a fugitive, hence "בְּאֶרֶץ נֹדֶד" (*beerets Nod*) denotes, "in the land of wandering or exile." Some very extravagant conjectures have been indulged in by modern commentators as to the locality of "the land of Nod." Some have placed it in Tartary, others in India, and others again in China.

17. *And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and bare Enoch; and he was building a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch.*

The question is here often asked, "who was the wife of Cain, as there has not yet been any mention made of the birth of a daughter?" There can be but one answer to this question; the wife of Cain must necessarily have been his sister. As the human family sprang from one primitive pair, such a marriage could, under the circumstances, not be avoided. There must of necessity in the beginning have been intermarriages of near kindred, which were afterwards, under the Mosaic law, prohibited, and accounted as incest. As regards no mention having yet been made of the birth of a daughter, it is sufficient to say, that daughters are not generally mentioned in the genealogical lists, unless under special circumstances. Thus, for example, of all Cain's female descendants the only one mentioned is *Naamah*, in verse 22. In the book of Adam there are two daughters of Adam mentioned, namely, "Luva, which, interpreted, means *the beautiful*, and "Aklejam." In other Oriental writings these names appear under somewhat different forms. Of course the names could only have been obtained through tradition.

"And bare Enoch," the Hebrew name **חֲנוֹךְ** (*chanoch*) *Enoch*, according to its derivation, may either signify *trained* or *dedicated*. It is quite probable that Cain, now driven from home and wandering in a foreign land, where no smiles of relatives would cheer him in his desponding moments, gradually began to realize the enormity of his crime and the miseries it entailed upon him; and taking warning from his own sad experience, determined to *train* up his son in the paths of virtue, and accordingly bestowed a name upon him which would constantly remind him of this duty. Solomon employs the verb, from which the name *Enoch* is derived, in the sublime proverb:

"Train **חֲנוֹךְ** (*chanoch*) a child in the way he should go;
Even when he is old he will not depart from it."

(PROV. xxii. 6.)

"And he was building a city," it is, he occupied himself in building one. In the original the participle **בִּנֶה** (*boneh*) *building* is employed, indicating that the work was progressing and not that it had been finished. We must here also divest ourselves of our modern notions of what constitutes a city, for the signification of the Hebrew word **עִיר** (*ir*) *city*, as employed in Scripture, is of wide extent, embracing small and large towns, and even a watch tower, as Isa. i. 8, **עִיר נְצוּרָה** (*ir netzurah*) *a watch tower*. This will also explain, that whilst in the whole land of Canaan there were only thirty-one royal cities, in Josh. xv. we have no less than 124 cities enumerated as belonging to the tribe of Judah alone; some of those evidently being but small towns. The building of this city by Cain, whatever its size may have been, was a great step in the advancement of civilization. "And he called the name of the city, after the name of his son Enoch." The naming of the city after his son was evidently intended to perpetuate the name of his family. The reason why he probably did not call it after his own name was, that he considered his name to have become too infamous by the crime of fratricide. The city Enoch was situated in the land of Nod, but as there is nothing known of that country, it is not surprising that no trace should ever have been discovered of this most ancient of all cities. Conjectures, indeed, have been numerous; the town *Anuchta* in Susiana has been identified with the city of Enoch, and so has *Henochia* in Syria, whilst those writers who identify India with the land of Nod, discover the city Enoch in the old commercial town *Kannuch* (*Sanskrit, Kanyakubdsha*.) in India. These, and other opinions which are not worthy of notice, are merely based upon the very slight resemblance of the names, and nothing more.

18. *And unto Enoch was born Irad : and Irad begat Mehujael : and Mehujael begat Methusael : and Methusael begat Lamech.*

The signification of the Biblical names is generally very easily traced ; with the names of the antediluvian patriarchs there exists, however, sometimes a difficulty owing to some of the roots employed in the infancy of the language having become obsolete. עירד (*Irād*), is probably only an earlier form for עירד (*Arod*), and in that case would denote a *wild ass*. מְהוּיָאֵל (*Mechujael*) probably denotes *one smitten of God*. מְתוּשָׁאֵל (*Methusael*) denotes a *mun of God*. The derivation of the name לִמְכָּךְ (*Lemech*) *Lamech*, cannot be traced, as no root exists now in Hebrew from which it could be derived. Some of our modern critics have laid great stress upon the similarity of some of the names in the Cainite genealogy, with some in the Sethite genealogy in the next chapter, as Cain and Cainan ; Irad and Jared ; Methusael and Methuselah ; whilst the names Enoch and Lamech occur in both genealogical tables ; and concluded from this that the two genealogical tables are merely different forms of one primary table. Or, in other words, that Moses had made up the Cainite genealogical table with names borrowed from the Sethite family by altering some slightly, and retaining the others.—(See Von Bohlen Com. on Genesis p. 59.) Upon such flimsy grounds our modern critics do not hesitate to call in question the genuineness of the Cainite genealogical table. The mere vague resemblance of names is not the slightest proof that they are identical. Any tyro in Hebrew philology knows that the slightest change in the form of the word, altogether alters their meaning. Let us, as an example, take some of these very names ; עירד (*Irād*) we have said may denote a *wild ass*, whilst ירד (*Jared*) signifies a *descent* ; מְתוּשָׁאֵל (*Methusael*) denotes a *man of God*, whilst מְתוּשֶׁלַח (*Methushelach*) Methuselah, signifies a *spear man*. It will thus be seen that although there is a resemblance in the form of the names, they differ in their meaning. Then again, as regards the names of Enoch and Lamech occurring in the genealogical tables of both families, surely our critics must be well aware that throughout the Scriptures, we find the same name sometimes occur in different families. Thus we have “Korah,” a son of Esau (Gen. xxxv. 5,) and “Korah” a Levite, cousin of Moses,—(Exod. vi. 21.) Again, we have “Enoch,” son of Cain, “Enoch,” son of Jared,—(Gen. v. 18 ; Enoch,” the son of Midian,—(Gen. xxv. 4) ; and “Enoch,” the eldest son of Reuben (Gen. xlv. 9.) Again we have “Kenaz,” a descendant of Esau,—(Gen. xxxvi. 11,) and “Kenaz,” the grandfather of Othniel,—(Josh. xv. 17,) and so we might adduce many other examples. Indeed, the very fact that the names of Enoch and

Lamech occur in both tables, is to my mind sufficient proof that the Cainite genealogical table was not constructed from names adopted from chapter five, otherwise all the names would have been altered to give it the appearance of an original table. Similarity and identity of names were the natural results from familiar intercourse of families.

Nothing worthy of recording seems to have taken place in the families of the patriarchs mentioned in our verse. The sacred historian passes the four generations rapidly over.

19. *And Lamech took unto himself two wives : the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.*

Lamech by taking two wives directly contravened the Divine law, Gen. ii. 24, and thus paved the way for polygamy, which ever since has been the fruitful source of misery and evil. The name *Adah* (merely another form of *עֲדָה* (*Adi*) denotes ornament, whilst *צִלָּה* (*Zillah*) signifies shadow. Both names are, no doubt, expressive of personal appearance.

20. *And Adah bare Jubal : he was the father of those who dwell in tents, and of those who have cattle.*

The name *יָבָל* (*Yaval*) *Jabal*, is evidently derived from the root *יָבַל* (*yaval*) to flow, with the accessory signification to increase; thus the name would denote increase, and very suitable to his occupation as a keeper of flocks. "He was the father of those who dwell in tents;" according to the Hebrew idiom, a person that originates or invents any thing is said to be the father of it. *Jabal* was the first who adopted the nomadic life, moving about with his flocks and living in tents, he is therefore said to be the father of those who afterwards followed the same occupation.

21. *And his brother's name was Jubal : he was the father of all such as handle (or play) the lyre and flute,*

The name *יֻבָּל* (*Yuval*) *Jubal*, is probably merely another form for *יֹבֵל* (*Yovel*) loud sounding music, and as *Jubal* was the inventor of musical instruments, the name is very appropriate. The instruments which *Jubal* constructed were, no doubt, at first of the simplest construction. The string instrument which he invented is in Hebrew called *כִּנּוֹר* (*kinnor*), and at first was a kind of lyre or cithera, played with the fingers, and of small size so as to be easily carried about.

In course of time the primitive form would gradually be improved upon, just as is the case in our times, until at last the larger and more complicated instrument, the harp, originated from it;

hence the Hebrew word is used to denote both instruments. The wind instrument which Jubal invented is in the original called **עוגב** (*ugav*) which no doubt was a kind of *flute*, but whether it was of the form of the modern flute it is impossible to say. There is an instrument still very common in the east made of *reeds*, which vary from five to twenty-three reeds, commonly called the *Pandæan pipe* or *syrinx*, and very probably the primitive instrument of Jubal may have been of this kind. The two instruments which Jubal invented may be regarded as the types of string and wind instruments. In the English version the Hebrew word **עוגב** (*ugav*) is rendered by "organ," which, even in its most primitive form, would be altogether too complicated an instrument to be invented at this early period of the history of the human race. We have no indication that the *organ* was known to the ancient Hebrews.

22. *And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, a hammerer or sharpener of all instruments of brass and iron : and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.*

The name Tubal-cain is a compound name. The derivation of **תובל** (*Tuval*), *Tubal* is doubtful; **קין** (*cayin*) *cain*, denotes a *lance* or *spear*, and may in the name be used as a representative of *all kinds of instruments*, and hence the name may probably signify *a worker of instruments*. Some writers trace the origin of the fabled god of the smiths, *Vulcan*, as a contraction of Tubal-cain, namely, *Vul-can*. Tubal-cain was the inventor of various kinds of brass and iron instruments. We have already stated that daughters are not generally mentioned in genealogical tables, unless under special circumstances; there must, therefore, be some reason for the mentioning of Naamah here, although the narrative does not afford any information on the subject. According to the Targum of Jonathan,* Naamah was the originator of *song*. This would afford sufficient reason for her name being mentioned. But this Targum contains so many extravagant statements, that no confidence can be placed in any of the traditions recorded in it, unless otherwise confirmed. More likely the reason of her name being given may be found in the derivation of the name **נעמה** (*Naamah*) which denotes *lovely, pleasant*, probably on account of some peculiar personal charm possessed by her.

*This Targum on the Pentateuch although ascribed to Jonathan ben Uzziel, the author of the Targum on the Prophets, is evidently of a more recent date; it mentions events which happened several centuries after the death of Jonathan ben Uzziel.

23. *And Lamach said to his wives :*

**Adah and Zillah, hear my voice,
Wives of Lamach, give ear to my speech !
For I have slain a man to my wounding,
And a young man to my hurt :*

24. *If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamach seventy and sevenfold.*

We have in this address the only relic of antediluvian poetry that has come down to us, and furnishes also the remarkable circumstance that poetry and music went hand in hand from the very earliest times ; for whilst we recognize in Lamach *the first poet*, we have in his son Jubal *the first musician*. As this poetical effusion is abruptly introduced without its having the slightest connection with what precedes or follows, no doubt, many of my readers in reading it have wondered what may have been the cause that prompted it. Indeed, the passage has generally been looked upon, as one of the most obscure in the whole of the Old Testament. Still, whilst we have no historical data to guide us in the elucidation of the passage, the deficiency is, to some extent, supplied by the information that may be gathered from the address itself. It is quite evident, from the last two lines of the address that Lamach compares some less heinous deed of his with the cold-blooded and unprovoked murder which Cain had committed. It is, therefore, highly probable, that Lamach had been attacked and wounded by some one, and that in defending himself, had the misfortune to kill his assailant. His wives would naturally stand in great dread, lest some of the deceased's friends would seek for vengeance. The custom to avenge the blood of a relative is very old, as we shall hereafter show. Lamach, therefore, in order to allay the fear of his wives, endeavours, by his address to assure them that there was no cause for anxiety, for if God would avenge Cain sevenfold, who out of mere jealousy and without any provocation, killed his brother, how infinitely greater will be the punishment of him who will attempt to injure me having merely acted in self-defence. Surely God, who, in His infinite mercy, promised to protect the fratricide, will likewise protect me. This appears to me to be the true import of Lamach's address. One not acquainted with the characteristics of Hebrew poetry would naturally conclude, from the language employed, that Lamach had killed "a man" and "a young man," but such is not the

*We have already explained this passage in Vol. I., p. 169, but in justice to new subscribers who have only commenced to subscribe with the beginning of this volume we think it but right to repeat the explanation here. The reader will, however, perceive that we have added some new matter.

case, the *third* and *fourth* lines merely form what in Hebrew poetry is called a **Synonymous Parallelism*, that is, where an idea expressed in one line is, for emphasis sake, repeated again in the next, either by employing nearly the same words again, or more or less vary the language. The same is the case, as the reader will perceive, in the *first* and *second* lines of the address, where the latter merely re-echoes the sentiment of the former. "A man" in the third line and "a young man" in the fourth line are, therefore, merely synonymous terms referring to one subject. But it may be asked, why is the address just introduced here? Perhaps the verse preceding the address may furnish an answer. It is there stated that Tubal-cain was the inventor of instruments of brass and iron; may not then this assault on Lamech have taken place soon after the invention of instruments? We have, alas! in our days, only too many instances of maiming and murder, as the result of carrying weapons.

We may here mention a tradition which is given in the Book of Adam, and which at one time apparently was very current in the East both among Jews and Christians, for it is found in many other ancient writings. According to this tradition Lamech had become blind, but accompanied the young herdsman who kept his flock into the field, for the young man would not go alone for fear of being robbed or murdered, for there was great wickedness among the descendants of Cain. One day the young man heard a rustling, and told his master that it was either a wild animal or robber! Lamech made ready his bow and asked the young man to direct him to the place from whence the noise came. The young man obeyed, and Lamech shot off his bow, and immediately heard something fall to the ground. On leading Lamech to the place, the young man discovered that it was Cain that had been killed, and told his master, who was exceedingly grieved at what had happened. (See also Hottinger Hist. Orient. ed. 11, p. 33. Michael Glycas, in Annal. p. 118. Rabbi Gedalja in Shalsh. Kabb. p. 92, and in some of the Patristic writings.)

25. *And Adam knew his wife again, and she bare a son, and she called his name Seth: for God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, for Cain hath slain him.*

With the address of Lamech the history of Cain and his descendants is finished, and in the verse before us the sacred historian returns now again to the first human pair in order to introduce the succeeding genealogy. After the death of Abel

* For full explanation of the different kinds of Parallelisms, see Vol. i. p. 169 *et seq.*, where a number of examples are given.

another son was born to Adam which must have greatly contributed to dispel in some measure the deep gloom which the premature death of Abel had cast over the household of our first parents. And Eve, fully sensible of the great gift, expressed her acknowledgment of God's mercy in the bestowal of this son, by calling him שֵׁת (*Sheth*) Seth, *i. e.*, *appointed one, compensation*. "For God, said she, שֵׁת (*sheth*) had appointed me another seed instead of Abel." Our modern critics in accordance with their Elohistic and Jehovistic theory, maintain that this must have originated from a different author, since the name אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) God is here employed, whilst throughout the chapter יְהוָה (*Jehovah*) LORD occurs. Had our critics only tried, they would have found that there exists a far more reasonable way of accounting for the use of Elohim here. The name אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*)—as we have already explained—expresses the attribute of *omnipotence*, and hence, it is employed wherever God's power is displayed, and Eve, therefore, very appropriately uses it here to show, that what the wickedness of man had taken from her, was again restored to her by *Divine omnipotence*. Seth was "appointed" in the place of Abel, in whose family was to be preserved the true worship of Jehovah. He became the ancestor of Noah, and through this pious patriarch, of Abraham, and through Abraham, of the chosen people of Israel. It is the history of his family which the sacred historian now proceeds to describe, a history in which one momentous event follows another in rapid succession, and furnishes information on subjects which could never have been disclosed by any uninspired writer

26. *And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos; then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.*

Seth called his first born son אֶנוֹשׁ (*Enosh*) Enos, the Hebrew name denotes *frailty*, expressive of the frail or mortal condition of man. Hence the word is sometimes used in the poetical writings for *man*, or more frequently for the whole human race, *mankind*. Thus Job says, "What is אֶנוֹשׁ (*Enosh*) man, that thou shouldest magnify him?" As much as to say, is he not a miserable, frail creature?—(Job. vii. 17.) So also the Psalmist.—(Ps. viii. 5, Eng. Ver. v. 4.) Seth, probably bestowed this significant name of human frailty upon his first born son in reference to the uncertainty of human life being especially reminded of this fact, by the untimely death of his brother Abel. It was probably also intended to teach humility. "Then began *men* (or more literally, 'then was begun') to call upon the name of the Lord." Simple as the language of the original is, it has, notwithstanding, been terribly

mistranslated and misinterpreted. Thus, in the Chaldee version of Onkelos, it is rendered, "then in his days the sons of men left off from praying in the name of the Lord." A similar rendering has been adopted by many Rabbinic writers, and also by some Christian commentators, who understand it as having a direct reference to the commencement of idolatry. This rendering and interpretation is altogether fallacious, for the phrase "to call on the name of Jehovah" throughout the Old Testament always denotes *to invoke the name of God in prayer*. Thus, for example, Gen. xii. 8, "and he built there an altar, and called on the name of the LORD." Compare also ch. xiii. 4, ch. xxi. 33; Ps. lxxix. 6, cv. 1; Is. xii. 4; 1 Chron. xvi. 3. Prayers, as well as sacrifices, have undoubtedly been previously offered in the families of Adam and Seth, but in the time of Enos, a further step in the advancement of religious observances was taken by the institution of public worship.

It was to this religious progress that the sacred historian alludes in our passage.

CHAPTER V.

In chapter five the sacred writer furnishes a genealogical table of the ten patriarchs from Adam to Noah, by whom the true faith was preserved. Thus forming a line between the first and second father of the human race, and embracing the time from the creation to the deluge, a period of 1656 years. In the genealogy of the family of the Cainites, the reader will have observed, no ages are recorded for this family on account of its wickedness, was accursed by God and had no future history, with the address of Lamech to his two wives its history is finished, and never resumed afterwards. In the genealogy of the family of the Sethites, on the contrary, the ages are recorded with great minuteness, for it is this family which form the basis of the sacred narrative which is to follow. The genealogical table is unique in its construction, and bears proofs of authenticity on the face of it. No impostor would have dreamed of making up such a list; for, observe, it gives first the years before the birth of the first son; then the rest of the life; and then the extent of the whole life. It would appear as if the sacred historian was solicitous that there should be no misconception in regard to the ages of these patriarchs. In the Samaritan text and the Septuagint version the numbers indeed differ somewhat from those in the original

Hebrew, but critics are almost unanimous in their opinions that the Samaritan and Septuagint variations are evident corruptions of the Hebrew text.

For the convenience of the reader we subjoin a tabular view showing the different ages, and also the variations in the Samaritan text, and the Greek version :

HEBREW TEXT.				GREEK VERSION.			SAMARITAN TEXT.		
PATRIARCHS.	Years before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.	Years before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.	Years before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.
1. Adam.....	130	800	930	230	700	930	130	800	930
2. Seth.....	105	807	912	205	707	912	105	807	912
3. Enos.....	90	815	905	190	715	905	90	815	905
4. Cainan.....	70	840	910	170	740	910	70	840	910
5. Mahalaleel ..	65	830	895	165	730	895	65	830	895
6. Jared.....	162	800	962	162	800	962	62	785	847
7. Enoch.....	65	300	365	165	200	365	65	300	365
8. Methuselah ..	187	782	969	187	782	969	67	653	720
9. Lamech.....	182	595	777	188	565	753	53	600	653
10. Noah.....	500		950	500		950	500		950
From the birth of Shem to the flood.	100			100			100		
Total.....	1656			2262			1307		

We are asked : "Where did Moses obtain the multifarious and complicated ages of these antediluvian patriarchs?" It would be quite sufficient to say in answer to this question, that he was an *inspired writer*. But it is quite probable that he may have drawn his information from existing genealogical records; still writing under inspiration, he was thus enabled to supply anything that was wanting in the chain of descent, or correct any error, if such occurred, in the account. In chap. xi. 10-26, we have a similar genealogical table of the fathers from the flood to the call of Abraham, but in that table only the age at the time of the first born and rest of life afterwards are given, the extent of the whole life is not mentioned like in chap. v. We come now to touch upon a very important subject, important since it has been eagerly laid hold of in these days of free thought and scepticism to disprove the veracity of the Mosaic record. In the discussion of this subject many physicians and naturalists have joined hands with Biblical critics. We are told that the most eminent physiologists have declared that "an age above 200 years, even under the most favourable circumstances, is a physical impossibility." Now we do not for a moment doubt that this conclusion is based upon the best information at present obtainable, and is quite

correct. But what information have we as to the prevailing state of the climate, mode of life, or many other circumstances that may have been conducive to longevity before the flood? And without this knowledge all that physiologists may write or say against the extraordinary vitality of the antediluvian patriarchs, is merely conjecture. Besides, these scientists start altogether from a wrong point in their investigations. In reconciling the longevity before the flood with the short life of mankind after it, it is all important that we start from the Scripture statement that man came from his Maker's hands an *immortal being*, for it shows that he originally was so constituted as to be capable of living for ever. But man sinned, and with sin he brought the penalty of death upon himself and his descendants. It would be vain to conjecture how this change from immortality to mortality was brought about, whether by change of constitution or by climatic change or other causes, the Scriptures have not revealed it, nevertheless the fact still remains. But whilst man was doomed to die, by the great mercy of God his life was not curtailed at once to its present short period, it was only when he sank from wickedness into still greater depravity, that the Divine decree went forth, that henceforth the span of life was to be 120 years. (Gen. vi. 3). And thus it was, as a writer has properly remarked, "every progress in the career of sin caused a new reduction in the years of human life; toil increased, and the years were again reduced; the greater the interval which separated man from the happy days of Paradise, the shorter grew his life, until at last it became comparable to the "shadow that passes," "the cloud that vanishes," or "the dream that disappears." Thus whilst Noah lived 950 years, Abraham only lived 175, Jacob, 147, Moses 120, Joshua 110, whilst David places the usual extent of life at 70; or under exceptional circumstances at 80.—(Ps. xc. 10.) Josephus, not always very orthodox in his explanations of miracles, defends the literal acceptance, of the patriarchal ages. He says: "But let no one, upon comparing the lives of the ancients with our lives, and with the few years which we now live, think what we have said of them is false, or make the shortness of our lives at present an argument that neither did they attain so long a duration of life, for those ancients were beloved of God, and (late)ly made by God himself, and because their food was then fitter for the prolongation of life, might well live so great a number of years." And he then goes on to say: "Now, I have for witness to what I have said, all those that have written Antiquities, both among the Greeks and barbarians; for even Manetho, who wrote the Egyptian History, and Berosus, who collected the Chaldean Monuments, and Mochus, and Hestæus, and besides

these, Hieronymus the Egyptian, and those who composed the Phœnician history, agree to what I here say. Hesiod also, and Hecateus, and Hellanicus, and Acusilaus, and besides these, Ephorus and Nicolaus, relate that the ancients lived a thousand years."—(Ant. b. 1 ch. 3, sec. 9.)

The Hindoos, who freely adopted statements from the Mosaic account, and more or less disguised them, held that there were four periods during which the longevity of man was gradually reduced from 400 to 300, then again to 200 and 100.—(Manu. 1, 83.) We have stated that Moses so constructed the genealogical table that there might be no misconception regarding the ages of these antediluvian patriarchs, and we will now give an example to show the wisdom in his having done so. Some writers, in order to reconcile the patriarchal longevity, have advanced the supposition that the *years* only meant *months*. This would certainly have the effect of reducing the ages of the antediluvian patriarchs to the present standard of human life, for thus Adam would only have been 77 years and 8 months old when he died, Seth only 72 years, &c. But let us now see how this theory would agree with the ages given when the first son was born. Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born, if we now reduce the years to months, then Adam was only 10 years and 10 months old at the birth of his son, whilst Enos was a father when 7½ years old, Cainan when not quite 6 years, and Enoch when 5 years and 5 months. It is surprising how perfectly reckless some commentators are in their interpretations. In their attempt to get over a difficult subject, they jump at conclusions without in the least examining what the consequences may be, or whether the language admits of such a construction as they desire to put upon it. In the case before us, they evidently did not examine whether the word שָׁנָה (*shanah*) year admits of being rendered by *month*, or they would have discovered that throughout the whole of the Old Testament it is only used in the sense of *year*, and that *month* is always expressed by חֹדֶשׁ (*chodesh*.) Hardly less absurd is the hypothesis adopted by some critics, that from Adam to Abraham the year had only 3 months, from Abraham to Joseph 8 months, and from Joseph's time 12 months. The Old Testament recognizes no other mode of reckoning than 12 months to the year, already in ch. viii. 7, we are told that the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat "in the seventh month on the seventh day."

1. *This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day God created man, in the likeness of God made He him.*

"This is the book," the word סֵפֶר (*sepher*) employed in the original, merely means a writing complete in itself, whether

long or short, or consisting of one sheet or more. Hence it denotes *a bill, a contract, a book, &c.* In our passage it is best rendered by *record*, as "This is the record of the generations of Adam."

"In the day God created man, in the likeness of God made He him." The sacred historian in giving the genealogical record of the descendants of Adam very appropriately prefaces the account by recapitulating the principal and most important events connected with the creation of the parent of the human family, to indicate, that as he was created in the likeness of God, so he transmitted that likeness also to his descendants.

This appears to me to be the reason why Moses here repeats again, what he had already so plainly stated in ch. i. 27, so that the fundamental truth that *all human beings bear the image of God* may stand at the very beginning of the history of the human race.

2. *A male and a female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.*

"And called their name Adam." This passage informs us that the name was not self-imposed, nor given by Moses, but bestowed by God Himself. Now, every act of God is done for some wise purpose, though human understanding may not *always* be able to divine the reason. Why, then, did God call our first parents, "Adam?" The only reasonable reply to my mind is, because the name expresses at once that man bears "the likeness of God;" for, as we have already stated, אָדָם (*Adam*), and דְּמוּת (*demuth*) likeness, are both derived from the root דָּמָה (*damah*), to be alike. It will also be seen that God did not bestow that name upon Adam alone, but He called "their name Adam." Adam, therefore, is the generic name of the human family as well as the name of the first man, the type of the human race.

3. *And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and he begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image; and called his name Seth.*

It will be seen that *a son* is not in the original, but the context requires the insertion. For a similar ellipsis see ch. vi. 4; xvi. 1; xxx. 1. Very frequently a noun is omitted after certain verbs where the context readily suggests the word that requires to be supplied.

"In his own likeness, after his own image." This passage clearly teaches, that the Divine likeness impressed by God in Adam at his creation was also transmitted by him to his descendants. The sacred writer is very precise, he employs here the same words דְּמוּת (*demuth*) likeness, and צֵלֶם (*tselem*)

image, as are employed in ch. i. 26. The passage, therefore, in my opinion, altogether sets at rest the question which has called forth so much discussion, even among the Patristic writers, "whether the internal nature of man, that is, his soul, is transmitted from parents to offsprings," (*Traducianism*), or "whether it is in every case the act of a new creation (*Creationism*). The former view, no doubt, is the one which is in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures. From verse 3 to verse 24 there is nothing that requires explanation.

24. *And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God had taken him.*

We have already remarked that the name *חֲנוֹךְ* (*Chanoch*) *Enoch* signifies *training, teaching*, and ancient traditions ascribe to him the invention of the art of writing, and the science of astronomy. According to some of the Rabbinical writers, "Enoch promulgated during his life many important laws, which were afterwards incorporated with the Mosaic laws." Some Arabic writers too, ascribe to him a code of laws. This pious patriarch was highly revered throughout the East, among the heathens as well as by the Jews. "And Enoch walked with God." This expression implies the closest and most familiar intercourse with God, and indicates a higher degree of piety than the expressions "to walk before God," Gen. xvii 1; xxiv. 40; or "to walk after God," Deut. xviii. 9. Indeed, the expression, "to walk with God," occurs only in two other places in the Old Testament, viz., Gen. vi. 9, where it is said of Noah that he "walked with God," and in Mal. ii. 6, of the priests, who, by virtue of their sacred office, stood in close relation to God, they only being permitted to enter the Holy Place, and have direct intercourse with Jehovah.

In the translation of Enoch, who was the first of the human race who passed from earth into heaven without tasting death or seeing corruption, we have the strongest proof we possibly can have of the immortality of the soul. It must be remembered, that Enoch, at the time of his translation, was only three hundred and sixty-five years old, which at that time was not the half of the ordinary life of man. The "taking away" of Enoch, therefore, from this temporal life at so early an age, can only find its explanation in God as a loving father, having taken him to His eternal home, there to enjoy greater and never ending bliss, as a reward for his great piety. He and Elijah being exempted by God from the common lot of man of seeing death and corruption. There are, indeed, many writers, who insist upon explaining "for God took him" as meaning nothing more than that he had been removed from the world,

by the common process of disease and death, but it is strange that it should not have occurred to these writers, that this would have been rather a punishment than reward for his great piety, and would be altogether inconsistent with the representations which we find throughout the whole of the Old Testament, "where length of days" and "a numerous offspring" are constantly spoken of as the rewards in this life for piety. The Apostle Paul distinctly asserts that, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him."—(Heb. xi. 5.) This statement of St. Paul is quite in accord with the prevailing opinion among the ancient Hebrews. Thus the author of the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus says: "Enoch pleased God, and was translated, being an example of repentance to all generations."—(ch. xlv. 16.) The same opinion is set forth in the Targum of Onkelos (Chaldee version), and in the Targum of Pseudo Jonathan, (another Chaldee version of the Pentateuch.) And so likewise both ancient and modern Jewish commentators have explained our passage, that Enoch was translated into heaven. Dr. Kalisch—who is not always very orthodox in his interpretations—remarks on the passage, "We are convinced that the taking away of Enoch is one of the strongest proofs of the belief in a future state prevailing among the Hebrews; without this belief, the history of Enoch is a perfect mystery, a hieroglyph without a clue, a commencement without an end."—(Com. on Gen. p. 184.) Kitto is equally explicit; he observes, "As a reward, therefore, of his extraordinary sanctity he was translated into heaven without the experience of death. Elijah was in like manner translated, and thus was the doctrine of immortality *palpably* taught under the ancient dispensation." (Encyclop. art. Enoch.) Delitzsch says, Enoch and Elijah were translated into eternal life with God, without passing through disease, death, and corruption, for a consolation of believers, and to awaken the hope of a life after death."—(Com. on Genes. p. 126.)

To Enoch was ascribed the apocryphal "Book of Enoch," or rather the book was written under his name. As regards the author and time when it originated, nothing certain is known. The prevailing opinion is, that it was written originally either in Hebrew or Chaldee by a pious Palestine Jew in the second century before the Christian era. The author seems to have collected all the traditions that have been prevalent at his time about that godly patriarch, and in order to give greater authority to his statements, and to enlist more readily the attention of his contemporaries to the teaching set forth in the book, he represents it as if it had been written by Enoch himself. The book represents Enoch as having foreseen in prophetic

vision the destruction of every living thing by the deluge, and to have exhorted his son Methuselah and his contemporaries, to turn from their evil ways. His prophetic eye penetrated still further into the future, he describes the course of Divine Providence till the coming of the Messiah. The book contains also an account of what was revealed to Enoch concerning the spiritual region, a narrative of the fallen angels and their punishment; and exhibits in forcible language the reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked. A Greek version of the book was current in the Primitive Church, and was quoted by the Fathers, but was altogether lost sight of after the eighth century. Tertullian seems to have regarded the book with great favour, and thinks that it had been preserved by Noah in the ark. Origen, Jerome, and Austin, on the contrary, speak of it as of no authority. It certainly was rejected by the Church.

The original Hebrew or Chaldee, as well as the Greek version, are irretrievably lost, but the traveller Bruce discovered in Abyssinia three perfect manuscripts of an Ethiopic version, which had been made from the Greek version, and brought them to England in 1773.*

Among modern writers the book has been brought into prominence by the discussion of the questions whether the Apostle Jude, in his general Epistle, verses 15, 16, actually cited from the book, or whether he quoted a traditional prophecy of Enoch, or whether the words quoted were received by direct revelation. The most eminent, and by far the largest number of commentators favour the opinion that Jude quoted from the book of Enoch. They argue that by doing so the Apostle by no means sanctions every thing that is written in the book, but, as an inspired writer, was able to discriminate between what is genuine and what is spurious, and that his sanction extends no further than to the portion he cites. They argue, "that St. Paul quotes several of the heathen poets; yet no one would from this infer that the Apostle approves altogether of the productions from which he had cited, or that his citation renders them of greater value. All that can be reasonably inferred from such a citation is, that the inspired writer in quoting a sentiment with approbation, it must be regarded as just and right, irrespective of the remainder of the book from which it was taken.

*Archbishop Lawrence, made an English translation from the Ethiopic. There is also a Latin translation by Gfrörer, and a German translation by Dr. A. Dillmann, with an introduction and commentary.

28. *And Lamech lived an hundred and eighty-two years and begat a son :*

29. *And he called his name Noah, saying, this one shall comfort us from our work and from the toil of our hands, from the ground which the LORD has cursed.*

In the preceding verses no reason is given for the bestowing of the respective names, but in this verse, it is said that Lamech called his son נֹחַ (*Noäch*) *Noah*, which means *rest*, and assigns as a reason for calling him so, "this one shall comfort us from our work and from the toil of our hands," &c. Now, here the question arises in what way did Noah comfort or relieve his parents from "the toil of their hands?" As the Scriptures nowhere afford any information how this prediction was fulfilled in Noah, hence interpreters have answered the question in different ways. Some have explained the passage merely to mean, that the assistance which Noah would render his parents in tilling the ground, would naturally relieve them of some toil. This is certainly a very reasonable conjecture, and yet it hardly furnishes a satisfactory explanation, for the declaration is unquestionably prophetic, and refers to some important event. Hence, many writers discover in the passage an allusion to the invention of agricultural instruments by Noah, by which labour would be diminished. But the sacred historian nowhere gives Noah credit for such important inventions which he would, no doubt, have done in the same manner as he gave Jubal credit for inventing musical instruments, and Tubal-cain for inventing instruments of brass and iron. Bishop Sherlock supposes, that the prediction had been verified by the restoration of the fertility of the earth to a great degree after the flood, and that the descendants of Noah are still enjoying the blessing which God had bestowed upon him. Against this supposition of the bishop, it may be urged that we have not the slightest proof that the agricultural labour after the flood involved less toil than it did before. Even Solomon, in Ps. cxxvii. 2, which bears his name as the author, speaks of eating, "bread of sorrows," *i. e.*, bread procured by toil and pain. And notwithstanding all our modern inventions of agricultural instruments the labour is, and ever will be, still very great, and attended with great anxiety. Now, whatever the true meaning of the passage may be, it must be explained as merely indicating a partial relief from labour; and this is quite in accordance with the common mode of expression prevailing in the East. But where is this partial relief from labour to be found? Probably the true answer to this question may be discovered by comparing ch. i. 29 with ix. 3. In the former passage, God assigned to men all the produce of the

earth for food. This produce, after the fall of our first parents could only be obtained through hard labour, and attended with great anxiety. In the latter passage, we have, for the first time, permission given for the use of the flesh of animals: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be to you for food, as the green herb I give you all things." The expression "as the green herb," refers to the first allotment in ch. i. 29. Here, I think, we have the partial relief; man was to be no longer entirely dependent upon the precarious products of the ground, and which could be obtained only by toil from the curse-laden ground, but henceforth he was to have more comfort, more peace of mind, for in case of failure, he need no longer fear starvation, but may have recourse to animal food. It was not Lamech's family alone that was to enjoy the relief and comfort granted to Noah, but all future generations were to enjoy it, and be benefited by it. This seems to me to be the import of Lamech's words; but as the reader has now the explanations of different interpreters before him, he is able to exercise his own judgment.

32. *And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

In the preceding generations only the eldest son is mentioned, but here all the sons of Noah are mentioned, because all three became the ancestors of very important nations, as is recorded in ch. x. The language in our verse must not be understood to convey the idea that the three sons were all born in one year, but that these sons were born to him only after he had reached the age of "five hundred years." The names which Noah bestowed upon his sons are also highly significant in their import. The name* שם (*Shem*) *Shem* denotes a name, but is also sometimes used in the sense of *renown* or *fame*. Noah, evidently, under the prompting of the spirit of prophecy bestowed this name upon his son, for *Shem* was to be *renowned* for spiritual blessings. In ch. ix. 26, Noah, after having pronounced a curse upon Canaan, immediately afterwards exclaimed, "Blessed be the LORD God of *Shem*." Jehovah is called *the God of Shem*, doubtless to intimate that He was so in a special manner, and as connected with special privileges. Accordingly we find that in the line of this father of the chosen people, the knowledge and worship of Jehovah was preserved. This supreme dignity vouchsafed to *Shem* developed itself gradually more and more, as the chosen people developed into

*An explanation of the names of the sons of Noah has already been given in Vol. 1. pp. 8, 9, but in justice to the many new subscribers who have not that Volume, I think it but right that the explanation should be repeated, as the import of the names are so highly significant.

a great nation. The next step we find in the promise made to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Afterwards we see God himself guiding the affairs of his chosen people, and taking up his abode among them. It is only by taking all this into consideration which enables us fully to comprehend the significance of Noah naming his son "Shem."

"Ham" is invariably named between his other two brothers, from which we may infer, though the time of his birth is nowhere given, that he was second in age, yet many regard him as the youngest son. The Hebrew name *חם* (*Cham*) denotes heat, from the root *חמך* (*chamam*) to be or become warm. The name, like that of his brother *Shem*, is prophetic; for all the descendants of Ham inhabited the tropic zone. Under a slightly modified form it was at a very early period adopted as one of the names of Egypt, and occurs on the inscription of the Rosetta Stone under the form of *chmé*. The Egyptian word signifies *the black country*, so called from the soil of Egypt being generally of that colour.

"Japheth" is always enumerated the last when the three brothers are spoken of, which in itself would indicate that he was the youngest. But besides this, *Shem* is, in ch. x. 21, called the elder brother of Japheth. Notwithstanding this, however, there are many writers who regard Japheth as the eldest. Their opinion is probably based upon the authority of the rendering of the above passage in the English version, which reads: "Unto *Shem* also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth, the elder, even to him were children born." The original reads *אחרי יפת הגדול* (*achi Yepheth haggadol*), and the question arises, whether the adjective here agrees with the first substantive, and should be translated, "the elder brother of Japheth," or whether it agrees with the second, and to be rendered, "the brother of Japheth, the elder." In the Septuagint—which our translators have followed—the latter rendering is adopted, but in the Vulgate the former. It is, however, of no use whatever to appeal in such philological points either to the Greek or Latin versions; they can only be decided by the usage of the Hebrew language itself. Now, if we examine similar constructions in the Old Testament, it will be found as a general rule, that when an adjective follows two substantives in a state of construction it agrees with the first noun. In Judges ix. 5, we have precisely the same construction: "Jotham, the son of Jerubbaal, the youngest," properly rendered in our version, "Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal." For other examples, see Hebrew

Bible; Deut. xi. 7; Judges i. 13. This point being settled, we now proceed to the more important point, namely, the *meaning* of the prophetic name "Japheth."

In Hebrew the name is יָפֶֿתֿ (*Yepheth*), and is derived from the root פָּתַח (*pathah*), to *spread*, to *enlarge*, and signifies, therefore, *enlargement*, or *enlarger*. The derivation of the name is beautifully brought out in Noah's prophetic declaration regarding Japheth ch. ix. 7, "God will enlarge Japheth," which reads in the original יָפֶֿתֿ לִיפֶֿתֿ (*yupht leyepheth*) literally, *will enlarge the enlarger*, where the reader will perceive there is *paranomasia*, or a play upon the two words, namely, the verb and the name derived from it. The appropriateness of the name "Japheth" becomes strikingly apparent, in the remarkable fulfillment of Noah's prophetic declaration as set forth in the above quoted passage. Japheth had seven sons, whilst Shem had only five and Ham only four. From his seven sons, the whole of Europe, and a considerable part of Asia were originally peopled, and ever since have been occupied by their descendants. Some probably also crossed over to America by Behrings Straits, from Kamtschatka. When this wide extent of territory is taken into consideration, it may truly be said of Japheth that he was an *enlarger*.

CHAPTER VI.

1. *And it came to pass when men began to multiply upon the earth, and daughters were born to them.*
2. *That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and they took for themselves wives of all whom they chose.*

We may safely say there is no passage in the Scriptures which has been so terribly misinterpreted as this passage, and this, not only by rationalistic writers, but by orthodox writers as well. The difficulty which the passage presents lies in the expression בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים (*bene haelohim*) *sons of God*," for here the question naturally arises, who are we to understand by this designation? Now, this question has been answered in three different ways. The general prevailing opinion among the Rabbinic writers is, that by the "sons of God" are to be understood here *princes, nobles, or mighty and influential men*, who took to themselves wives from the lower classes. This opinion has also been espoused by some Christian and rationalistic writers. This mode of explaining the expression, how-

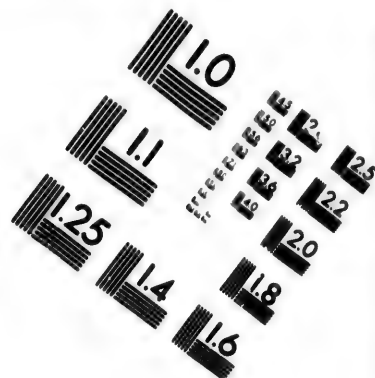
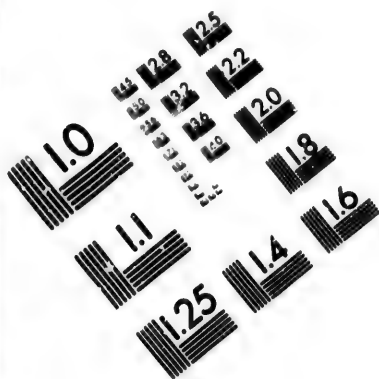
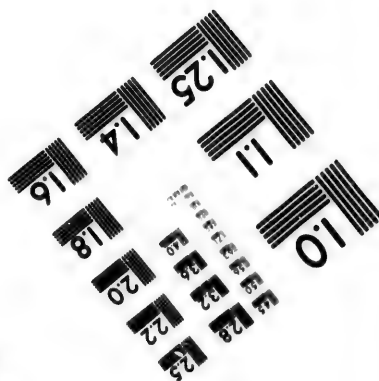
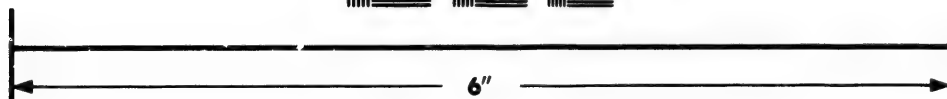
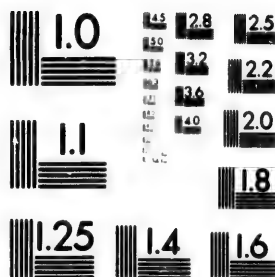


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ever, is neither sustained by the usage of language, nor does it harmonize with the context. Nowhere throughout the Scripture is the expression "sons of God" ever used in reference to "princes and noblemen," and it is quite unaccountable that this mode of explaining the expression should have been so favourably received among the Rabbinic writers whose Hebrew scholarship is generally of the highest order. The context, too, implies a degeneracy from a moral and religious state, and not a mere stepping down from a higher and honorable position. Again, a still more widely prevailing opinion is, that by "the sons of God," are meant *angels*. This view is very ancient. In the best manuscripts of the Septuagint the words בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (*bene Elohim*) are rendered ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ *angels of God*. In the book of Enoch this view is also set forth, and Justin, Irenæus, Clemens, Alexandrinus, and others quoted this opinion from the book with approbation. Josephus, too, states that "many angels of God accompanied with women."—(Antiq. b. 1 ch. iii. par. 1.) Philo, also entertained the same view. This opinion, strange as it may appear, is also very prevalent among modern commentators and critics, especially among those belonging to the school of higher criticism, who persist in the assertion that Moses adopted the notion of intermarriage of angels or spirits with the daughters of men from heathen mythology. Thus Kalisch observes: "The very commencement of the narrative contains a notion, which cannot be explained from the Bible, but which is indisputably borrowed from foreign and heathen sources. The 'sons of God' descended to the beautiful 'daughters of men.' They deserted their pure and ethereal nature, and abandoned themselves to despicable depravities; they left the heaven, in order to corrupt the earth and themselves."—(Com. on Genesis p. 170.) This is the language of an English commentator, and may be taken as a fair sample of the views entertained upon the subject by those belonging to the English branch of the rationalistic school, and held in common with those belonging to the German branch.—(See for example Von Bohlen. Com. on Genesis, p. 82.) The notion that by the designation, "sons of God," in our passage, are meant *angels*, evidently had its origin, from the same phrase being used in regard to *angels*, in Job I. 6, ch. ii. 1. "Again, there was a day and בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים (*bene haelohim*) the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them." See also ch. xxxviii. 7.) There can be no doubt that in these passages the phrase denotes *angels*. But this only proves that the phrase may be thus interpreted: it does by no means follow, that it must be so explained everywhere else. We have already stated that when a word or phrase admits of different inter-

pretations care must be taken to select that meaning which accords best with the context, and harmonizes in every respect with the teaching of the Scriptures. In the passage before us, both the context as well as the teaching of Scripture, are clearly against the supposition that by "sons of God," are denoted *angels*. In the first place we may remark, that the expression "sons of God" is only applied to *holy angels*. It will be seen, on referring to the above quoted passages from the book of Job, that Satan was not included among "the sons of God," but is said to have come among them. In our passage, however, if indeed *angels* were meant, they could only have been *fallen angels*. In the second place, the Divine declaration contained in verse 3 is only applicable to *human beings*, it would be meaningless as applied to angels. And thirdly, the expression "and they took for themselves wives," is in itself fatal to the assumption that angels are meant in our passage. The phrase *לָקַח אִשָּׁה* (*lakach ish-shuh*) to take a wife, throughout the Old Testament is only used in reference to the *marriage relation* as originally instituted by God, ch. ii. 24, and never to unlawful intercourse. Besides all this, in Matt. xxii. 30, it is distinctly stated that "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." (See also Mark xii. 25). It is, indeed, surprising, that the opinion of intermarriage between *angels* and *daughters of men* should have been so widely accepted, and so strenuously maintained, as the phrase can be readily and consistently explained without adopting such a repulsive view. By "the sons of God," are unquestionably meant the descendants of Seth who, according to ch. iv. 26, "began to call upon the name of the LORD," and formed the visible church. These saw the daughters of the impious Cainites and allured by their beauty, intermarried with them. In the original it is, "saw the daughters of *הָאָדָם* (*ha'adam*) Adam, that is of the wicked race who had nothing in them but the depraved nature of fallen man. It is by no means remarkable that the godly Sethites should here be designated "sons of God," for this appellation is sometimes applied to true worshippers as well as angels. Thus, for example, in Hos. i. 10, the Israelites are called "the sons of the living God." In Deut. xiv. 1, it is said of the Israelites, "Ye are children of the LORD your God."

The book of Adam relates, that Noah often preached among the Cainites, but that the Sethites descended from the holy mountain, and dwelleth now with the Cainites and intermarried with them." Modern orthodox Jewish and Christian writers, with few exceptions, understood by the phrase "sons of God," descendants of Seth. The entering into the company of the depraved is the first step to a downward career. The

evil influences of the wicked are sure to make themselves sooner or later felt. In the case of the Sethites the evil influences did their destructive work most terribly, and ought to serve as a warning to young and old. Well might Solomon exclaim :

" My son, if sinners entice thee,
Consent thou not !

" My son, go not in the way with them,
Keep back thy foot from their path."

Prov. I. 10, 15.

And well might Moses afterwards prohibit marriages with heathen nations, (Deut. vii. 3, 4;) and St. Paul warn the Corinthians, " Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers ; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? and what communion hath light with darkness ? (2 Cor. vi. 14.)

Out of the ten generations in the line of Seth, only the family of Noah was found worthy to escape the general destruction by the flood.

3. *And the LORD said, My Spirit shall not rule in man for ever ; since he is also flesh ; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.*

This verse contains several philological difficulties, and consequently different renderings are given of it, they however do not materially affect the sense. The first difficulty arises from the use of the verb יָדֹון (*yadun*) which I have rendered *shall rule*, as this verb only occurs in this place. Many ancient interpreters have rendered "shall not remain or dwell," from which it would appear as if their copies had the reading יָלֹון (*yalun*), and the difference of reading may have easily originated from the transcribers having mistaken the letter ד (*daleth*) *d* for the letter ל (*lamed*) *l* or *vice versa*. Gesenius renders the passage "my Spirit shall not be made law in man for ever," and explains, "the higher and divine nature shall not for ever be humiliated in the lower," giving to the Hebrew verb the signification of the Arabic verb (*dana*), for which there is neither any authority, nor any necessity. Most modern interpreters render "shall not rule" or "shall not judge,"* whilst a few render like in the English Version, "shall

*Those who adopt this rendering very properly regard the form יָדֹון (*yadun*) as synonymous to יָדִין (*yadin*), to judge, to rule. These two forms occur in other verbs, thus we have גִּיל (*gil*) and גִּיל (*gul*) to rejoice, שִׁים (*sim*) and שָׂם (*sum*) to put, to place, and why not also the forms דָּן (*dun*) and דִּין (*din*) to judge, to rule ?

not strive." The next difficulty lies in the word בִּשְׁגָמָה (*beshaggam*) which in the Septuagint, the Syriac, the Chaldee, and Vulgate versions is rendered "in that also," or "since also,"* namely, "since he also is flesh." This rendering is likewise adopted by the Jewish and many modern commentators. Many of the modern writers, however, render the word "in their transgression,"† namely, "in their transgression or wandering they are flesh." So Vater, Rosenmüller, Ewald, Gesenius, Tuch, Delitzsch, and others; but, from our remarks in the note below, it will be seen that on philological ground this rendering is not admissible.

"Since he is flesh," that is, since man has become utterly corrupt. Even the professing Sethites, those who had been deemed "the sons of God," cast off all spirituality, and gave themselves up to a profligate life. "Flesh" is, in Scripture, sometimes employed to denote the *whole body*, and at the same time implying proneness to sin. Hence Solomon says: "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin."—(Ecc. v. 6.) Here it will be observed "flesh" is used for *the body*, as the seat of desire. And Christ exhorts his disciples: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."—(Matt. xxvi. 41.)

Now, although our verse, as we have shown, presents some philological difficulties, yet its import is perfectly plain. It is of little consequence whether we translate "my Spirit shall not rule, or dwell, or judge, or strive in man for ever." The meaning evidently is, that man had become too hardened and depraved to allow himself to be ruled or guided by the Spirit of God, although ample time and opportunity had been

*In adopting the rendering "since," or "because also," they have taken the word as compounded of the preposition בִּי (*in*), שֶׁ (*the* fragment of the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר (*asher*) that, and גַּם (*gam*) also.

†Those who render בִּשְׁגָמָה (*beshaggam*) "in their transgression" regard it as compounded of the preposition בִּי (*in*), שֶׁ (*shag*) transgression, the infinitive *hal* used substantively, of שָׁגַג (*shagag*) to transgress, and the pronominal suffix ׁם (*am*) their, and this analysis of the word, is certainly also admissible. But by taking the word in this manner, we are confronted with the insurmountable difficulty of having the plural suffix ׁם their immediately followed by the singular pronoun הוּא (*hu*) he. The passage in the original reads, בִּשְׁגָמָה הוּא בִּשְׁגָמָה (*beshaggam hu vusar*) and would, therefore, give the anomalous rendering, in their transgression he is flesh. Keil and Delitzsch (Com. on Gen., p. 134), and others, get over the difficulty by rendering the singular pronoun הוּא (*hu*) he freely in the plural "they," namely, "in their wandering they are flesh," but this is altogether arbitrary, and not warranted by the usage of language. They say there are other examples of such a change in the number, no doubt there are, but they can in every instance be readily reconciled. There can be no case produced which is analogous to the one in this passage.

given him to repent and turn from his wicked ways, but it was of no avail. God, therefore, determined to end His divine forbearance, and destroy the godless race. The poet Cowper has well said :

"There is a time, and justice marks the date ;
How long suffering Clemency to wait ;
That hour elapsed th' incurable revolt
Is punished, and down comes the thunderbolt."

Yet the Almighty, who is ever "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness," did not at once cut them off, but still granted them a respite of 120 years, to give them another opportunity to repent before the day of vengeance should come. It was in the 480th year of the life of Noah, that God informed him of the coming of the deluge ; according to Hale's chronological table 3275 B. C., and the flood according to the same table came 3155 B. C., it was during the intervening 120 years that Noah preached repentance among the degenerate race, hence Peter calls him "a preacher of righteousness." (2 Peter ii. 5.)

4. *The tyrants were on the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bear children to them, these are the mighty ones who were of old, men of renown.*

In the original, the word which we have rendered "tyrants" is נפילים (*nephilim*), and is evidently derived from the root נפל (*naphal*) to fall, also to fall upon for the purpose of doing injury ; in the latter sense the verb is used in Job i. 15. Hence, according to this derivation, the word would denote persons who fall upon others in order to inflict injury, men who had no regard for God or man, carrying out by force their wicked designs. In this sense Luther has taken the word and rendered "*Tyrannen*" tyrants, in his German version, so also Keil and Delitzsch (Com. on Gen. p. 137), Gesenius, and others. And this sense accords well with the context as the sacred historian is describing the immense wickedness that prevailed at that time. In the Targum of Onkelos it is rendered גבירא (*gibboraya*) powerful men, and similar in the Syriac version. Symmachus translates βιαῖοι, i. e., violent men, and Aquila ἐπιπληκτορες, i. e., men who attack, invaders. The Nephilim were probably a class of men among the Cainites who made it a practice to tyrannize over the people.

The idea that the Nephilim were giants has originated with the Septuagint, where the word is rendered γίγαντες, giants, which rendering has also been adopted in the Vulgate, in our Authorized Version, and by many modern commentators. The

word occurs only again besides here in Num. xiii. 33, where the spies report regarding the land of Canaan: "And there we saw the Nephilim, (בְּנֵי עָנָק *bene Anak*), sons of Anak, (*i. e.* long-necked people) from the Nephilim; and we were in our eyes as grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes." Keil and Delitzsch consider that this passage furnishes no proof that *giants* are meant by the Nephilim. They remark, "When the spies describe the land of Canaan, as 'a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof,' and then add (ver. 33), 'and there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak among (lit. מִן (*min*) from, out of, in a partitive sense), the Nephilim, by the side of whom they were as grasshoppers;' the term Nephilim cannot signify giants, since the spies not only mention them especially along with the inhabitants of the land, who are described as people of great stature, but single out only a portion of the Nephilim as sons of Anak בְּנֵי עָנָק, *i. e.*, long-necked people or giants." In our version it is rendered, "the sons of Anak, *which came of the giants*;" but it will be seen that the words "*which came*," are in italics, which shows that they are not in the original, and therefore literally rendered, it would be, "and the sons of Anak from or among the Nephilim." The Nephilim, mentioned in Num. xiii. 33, were most likely a powerful aboriginal people of Canaan, among whom dwelled some of the descendants of Anak who were especially remarkable for their great stature. Anak, from whom sprang the famous giants so often mentioned in Scripture, was the son of Arba, after whom was called the ancient city קִרְיַת אֲרָבַע (*Kirjath Arba*) (Gen. xxiii. 2.) *i. e.*, the city of Arba, afterwards called Hebron. His descendants are always spoken of as "sons" or "children of Anak," "sons of the Anakims," or merely "Anakims," and the terms mean *long-necked people, giants*."

The commentators who take Nephilim in the sense of *giants*, must acknowledge that that meaning cannot be traced from any root now existing,* whilst on the other hand we have shown, that the meaning, *tyrants*, is very readily obtained from a very common root. But whilst we consider the rendering *tyrants* as according best with the context, and also the derivation of the word being then readily obtained, it is proper to say, that from a theological standpoint, it is quite immaterial which of the renderings we have given is adopted, since the sacred writer alludes more particularly to the wicked acts of the Nephilim.

*Some writers have indeed taken the word as a participle Niphal of the verb פָּלַא (*pala*) to distinguish, hence *extraordinary men*, but such a derivation is together out of the question. The form of the part. Niph. is נִפְלָאִים (*niphla'im*) which is quite different to נִפְלִיִּם (*nephilim*.)

In the Revised Version the Hebrew term, "Nephilim," is retained in the text, but "giants" is given in the margin. I think it would have been better if one of the renderings given by the different versions had been adopted in the text.

The word which we have just been treating on, is only one of the very many similar cases in the Old Testament, in the rendering of which there exists a great diversity of opinions. From this it may be seen how utterly hopeless it is of any version ever being executed that would give universal satisfaction, when we see in so many instances, versions differing from versions, interpreters from interpreters, and critics from critics.

"These are the mighty ones," (Eng. Ver., heroes,) the word גִּבּוֹרִים (*gibborim*) signifies *mighty men*, but is used in a bad as well as in a good sense. Hence we read Is. v. 22, "Wo unto those גִּבּוֹרִים (*gibborim*) mighty to drink wine." And Ps. lii. 3, (Eng. Ver. v. 1,) "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief הַגִּבּוֹר (*haggiubor*) O mighty man." And so, in our passage, "and when the sons of God came to the daughters of men, they bare children unto them: these are הַגִּבּוֹרִים (*haggiaborim*) the mighty ones who of old were men of name," i. e., tyrants renowned for their wicked deeds. I take, therefore, the meaning of our verse to be, that in the days when the Sethites apostatized and cast their lots with the wicked Cainites, there were tyrants or men remarkable for their wicked deeds upon the earth; and when the sons of God married the daughters of the ungodly Cainites, children were born to them who became also renowned for their excessive wickedness. Hence the sacred narrative goes on to say:

5, *And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

6. *And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.*

In these verses the sacred writer simply sets forth in more direct and explicit language the immense and universal state of depravity into which the human race had sunk, in order to show how merited and just the fearful punishment was which he now proceeds to recount. "Every יֵצֶר (*yetser*) lit. formation of the thoughts of his heart was only continually evil,"* implies the highest degree of wickedness, every purpose, every desire, which he was able or unable to carry out was evil. The heart was among the Hebrews as with us considered as the seat of emotions of every kind. The Hindoos too, regarded the reason-

*There is a saying in the Talmud, that the "evil imagination entices man to sin in this world, and testifies against him in the next." (Succah, fol. 52, col. 2.

ing faculty as being seated in the heart. "And the LORD repented that he had made man." It must not be supposed that this passage implies that God is variable in His purposes; "the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." (1 Sam. xv. 29.) This and similar expressions are borrowed from the ordinary language employed by men, and indicate great disappointment. God had created man an innocent being, but now he has become a corrupt, vile creature. Sin had propagated sin, and every successive generation had become more depraved than the preceding. "And it grieved Him at His heart." It is impossible for language to depict more vividly, how utterly detested sin is in the sight of God. The passage expresses the most intense grief, and Calvin has well remarked, "God is no less hurt by the atrocious sins of men, than if they pierced his heart with mortal anguish."

7. And the LORD said, I will blot out the man whom I have created from upon the face of the earth, both man and beast, and reptile, and the fowls of the air; for I repent that I have made them.

"I will blot out the man whom I have created." What a fearful contrast does the terrible declaration contained in this passage present to the loving declaration; "Let us make man in Our image, in Our likeness; and let him have dominion," &c. Little more than fifteen centuries had elapsed since man came from his Maker's hands an immortal, pure, and spotless being, and as he was perfectly good, so was he also destined to be perfectly happy. God blessed them, and wherever God's blessing rests, there reigns peace and happiness. But what a woeful change does the narrative now present to us! Man, so deeply sunk in iniquity without any hope of being reclaimed, that the Almighty determined to blot him out from the face of the earth. His divine justice demanded that the sinners should be destroyed. But not only man, but the animals likewise were to meet with the same fate. This must be accounted for on the ground that all the living creatures were created for man, and he was constituted their ruler, and, therefore they are also involved in his fall and punishment. Some of the Rabbinic writers have indeed supposed that the beasts had also become degenerated, so for example the celebrated commentator Rashi (see his Commentary on verse 12), but this view cannot for a moment be entertained with any show of reason. There are other passages in Scripture which show the animals to have participated in the punishment for the sins of man. Thus, for example, Hos. iv. 3, "Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the

fores of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea shall be taken away." The reader may also compare Jer. xii. 4, Zeph. i. 2. The word *בהמה* (*behemah*) which is generally used in reference to domesticated animals, is here, as well as in some other places, used in a more extensive sense to include wild animals also.

8. *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.**

This grace, we learn from ch. vii. 1, was obtained on account of his righteousness. God does not permit the righteous to suffer in the punishment of the wicked. So, by the grace of God, Lot, his wife and two daughters, were spared when God destroyed the wicked cities, Sodom and Gomorrah. But Lot's wife, disobeying the commandment not to look behind, was instantly converted into "a pillar of salt." So Rahab, the hostess at Jericho, who extended hospitality and protection to the spies sent by Joshua, was, by faith, saved from perishing with them that believed not when the city was taken. (Compare Heb. xi. 31, James ii. 25). And here we must not omit to offer a few remarks on the word *זונה* (*zonah*), rendered in our version "*harlot*." Generally the word has been derived from the root *זנה* (*zanah*), to commit fornication, and Gesenius remarks: "Nor is there any ground to render *זונה* (*zonah*) in Josh. ii. 1, *hostess*, one who keeps a public house, as if from *זון* (*zun*), to nourish." I must differ from Gesenius and from those who have rendered the word *harlot*, for I think there is very good ground for rendering it *hostess*.

* Among the ancient Hebrews the five books of Moses, were read through during the year: a practice still observed among the orthodox Jews. For this purpose they were divided into fifty-four sections to answer to the fifty-four Sabbaths which occur in the Jewish leap-year. The twelve lunar months, employed by the Hebrews, fall twelve days short of the twelve solar months, hence, in order to regain these lost days, they intercalated every three years one month, since in the thirty-six solar months there would be thirty-seven lunar months. During the ordinary years which have only fifty-two Sabbaths, the sections were made to agree by joining two together, and not by omitting any of them. Thus the five books of Moses were read through every year. (Compare Acts xv. 21.) The end of each פרשה (*parashah*) section is indicated by the letters פ פ פ (p p p) or ס ס ס (s s s). Each section is also denoted by its first important word, so that the first section is called בראשית (*bereshith*), which finishes with verse 8. The second נח (*Noach*), &c., and the name of the section is given on the top of the page immediately after the name of the book. At the end of verse 8 the first (*parashah*) section is concluded, so that it contains no less than five chapters and eight verses, or 146 verses in all. The sections, however, differ in length. During the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes the reading of the תורה (*torah*) Law was suspended, but was restored again in the time of the Maccabees, and a selection from the prophets was also read after the reading of the section of the Law. (Compare Acts xiii. 15.) This practice is still observed among the orthodox Jews at the present time, and in most editions of the Hebrew Bible a table of the selections from the prophets is given at the end of the Bible.

There can be no objection on philological grounds to derive the word from זון (*zun*) to feed, for there exist similar derivations, thus we have קומה (*komah*), stature, from קום (*kum*) to stand or rise up; רומה (*romah*) elevation from רום (*rum*) to lift up; נומה (*numah*) slumber from נום (*num*) to slumber, &c. Then, again, every Hebrew scholar is well aware that frequently the true meaning of a word can only be obtained from the context. Now, in this case, the context is all in favour of the rendering *hostess*, and entirely against the rendering "harlot." In the first place, it is but reasonable to suppose that Joshua, in sending men on such an important errand, would select pious and most trustworthy men, and that these men setting out on their dangerous enterprise would consider themselves under the direct guidance and protection of the Almighty; is it, therefore, at all likely that these men would take up their abode with a person whose mode of life is an abomination in the sight of God? As an *inn-keeper* or keeper of a *lodging-house* she may have been a respectable and good woman, and, indeed, her whole conduct endangering her own life, and perhaps the lives of her family, in shielding the spies, shows that she was possessed of good principles. In the second place, we find this very Rahab afterwards married to Salmon, a prince of Judah—who is called "the father of Bethlehem," having probably greatly improved and adorned the city—to whom she bore Boaz, and from whom descended Obed, Jesse, and David (Matt. i. 5, 6.) Now, it was surely not likely that a Jewish prince would have married a woman who had led a dissolute life? That Rahab was a *hostess*, and not a *harlot*, was evidently the prevailing opinion of the ancient Hebrews, for in the Targum (Chaldee version) it is translated אהתא פונדקיתא (*ittetha pundekitha*) a woman an *innkeeper*, So also in the German version of Rabbi Shalom Hakkohen, *Gastwirthin*, hostess. So Prof. Leo, Dr. Adam Clark, and many Jewish and Christian commentators. In the Septuagint, and also Heb. xi. 31, and James ii. 35, the Hebrew word זונה (*zonah*) is indeed rendered by πόρνη which generally denotes a *harlot*, but the question here arises whether the Greek word in those passages may not be used in the sense of a *hostess*, as πορνη after all is derived from πρῶνω, to trade, to sell. It is well known, that in the New Testament some Greek words are used with different meanings to those which they had previously borne. According to some classical writers it apparently was no uncommon thing for women acting as *hostesses*. Herodotus speaks of Egyptian women carrying on *commerce* and *keeping inns*, whilst the men remain at home and weave. (See Herod, in Euterp. c. xxxv.) It is, therefore, not at all unlikely that widows

or single women may have kept places of public entertainment among the Canaanites as a means of making an honest livelihood. Everybody knows that in our times, this is a very common thing. I have always felt, that in rendering the Hebrew word by *harlot* a stain is cast upon the character of Rahab, for which there is not the slightest ground. It is simply a question as to the mode of deriving the word, and as I have adduced examples of precisely similar derivations, there exists, therefore, no objection on philological ground in rendering the word *hostess*, whilst every thing else, so far as we have any information, is most decidedly in favour of that rendering. Influenced by these considerations, I have taken this opportunity—though somewhat out of place—to offer a few remarks upon the subject, leaving it to the judgment of the intelligent reader to decide as to the soundness of the arguments which I have adduced. Since the above was written the Revised Version came to hand, in which I perceive the rendering “harlot” was retained; I cannot say that this does in the least affect my opinion on the subject.

9. *This is the history of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, and perfect he was in his generations : with God walked Noah.*

We have already remarked (ch. ii. 4) that the word *תולדות* (*toledoth*), occurs only with a plural form, though not always with a plural signification, for while it sometimes denotes *generations*, it is also employed in the sense of history or family history. In the latter sense it is evidently used here. The rendering: “Those are the generations of Noah,” as given in the Authorized Version, and also retained in the New Version, does not harmonize with the context, for the sacred historian enters upon the narrative of the deluge, and the preservation of Noah and his family in the ark, and evidently used the phrase as the heading of the narrative, namely, “This is,” *i. e.*, what now follows in the following narrative: “the history, or family history of Noah,” *i. e.*, how Noah and his family have been preserved in the ark. Thus, Von Bohlen has very properly rendered “Dies ist die Geschichte des Noah,” *i. e.*, *This is the history of Noah*; so Gesenius: “This is the family history of Noah;” Geddes: “This is the account which we have of Noah;” and so many other eminent commentators. Prof. Bush explains the phrase, ‘the generations of Noah,’ “that is, the matters of record relating to him, the character he sustained, and the events which happened to him.” The sacred writer very appropriately commences the history of Noah by setting forth the great piety of the patriarch through which he found mercy with God, and together with his family escaped the general

destruction by the flood. The language employed expresses the highest degree of holiness. "Noah *was* a righteous man," he was just in all his dealings with men, and doing that which is pleasing to God. According to the Scriptures a righteous man is merciful and liberal.

"The wicked borroweth and payeth not again ;
But the righteous showeth mercy and giveth."
(Ps. xxxvii. 21.)

And not only is the kindness extended to human beings, but also to the animals :

"A righteous man careth for the life of his beast,
But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."
(Prov. xii. 10.)

The righteous *man* hates deceit, but is a lover of the truth :

"A righteous *man* hateth lying," (lit. "hateth a word of falsehood," used to express deceit in general.)—Prov. xiii. 5.)

The righteous *man* loves wisdom, and seeks to obtain it :

"Teach a righteous *man*, and he will increase in learning," (lit. "he will add learning," by habitually seeking after it.)—Prov. ix. 9.)

The righteous *man* is temperate in his mode of living :

"The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul," (i. e., to the satisfying of his hunger, and no more.)—Prov. xiii. 25.)

The righteous *man* is careful of his speech :

"The heart of the righteous studieth to answer," (i. e., he carefully weighs his words before he answers, so that he may not give utterance to any thing evil or offensive.)—(Prov. xv. 28.)

When Solomon says : "Be not righteous over much ; neither make thyself over wise : why shouldst thou destroy thyself," (Eccles. vii. 16), it must not be supposed to convey a warning against leading an over righteous life, or against becoming too wise, but is rather a warning against hypocritical righteousness, such as was in later times assumed by the Pharisees, and against pretended and false wisdom. This is evidently the meaning that Solomon wishes to convey, for he says, v. 20, "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not," which shows, that he did not entertain the idea that a man could be over righteous. The celebrated commentator Rabbi Maimonides explains the passage as a warning against asceticism, in denying one's self innocent pleasures and amusements for fear of finding sin in them. (See *Yad Hachazakah*, part i. B. iv., sec. iii. 3, 4.) But this interpretation of the passage is

not admissible, for it can hardly be said that a person destroys himself merely by abstaining from pleasures and amusements. But Noah was not only "a righteous man," but he was also "perfect in his generations." The Hebrew word תָּמִים (*tamim*) denotes *perfect, blameless, innocent*. When used in connection with the animals offered as sacrifice, it denotes *without blemish* in the strictest sense, but when employed to express the piety of a person, according to Scripture usage, it does not mean absolutely *sinless*, but merely in so far as man can be perfect, for, as Solomon said, "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." And hence the Psalmist exclaims

"If thou LORD shouldest mark iniquities,
O LORD, who shall stand?" (Ps. cxxx. 3.)

And Job confesses,

"Of a truth I know that it is so;
But how can man be just with God?" (Job ix. 2.)

And so in other places the universal sinfulness of our race is set forth. "In his generations," that is, the age he lived in, among his contemporaries. The Hebrew word for "generations" here employed is, דֹּרוֹת (*doroth*), and as will be seen is different from that used in the beginning of the verse,

But our verse does not only state that Noah was righteous and perfect, it goes on to say that he "walked with God," an expression, which, as we have already observed, implies the closest and most confidential intercourse, and indicates a much higher degree of piety, than the expression, "to walk before God" or "to walk after God." Only in two other places in the Old Testament does the phrase occur, namely, ch. v. 24, it is said of Enoch that he "walked with God; and he was not, for God took him;" and Mal. ii. 6, it is said of the priests who by virtue of their sacred office stood in close relation to God.

10. *And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

The birth of the three sons has already been mentioned, ch. v. 22, but the sacred historian repeats it again here, as forming an important part of the history of Noah which he is now narrating.

11. *And the earth was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence.*

"And the earth was corrupt," that is, the inhabitants of the earth. "The earth" is sometimes tropically used for the inhabitants of the earth. So also the word תֵּבֵל (*tevel*) *world* for the inhabitants of the world. Thus Ps. xcvi. 13.

"For He cometh to judge the earth (*i. e.*, the inhabitants of the earth). He shall judge the world (*i. e.*, the inhabitants of the world,) with righteousness."

The corruption here spoken of was a general moral corruption: the inhabitants of the earth had become altogether morally degenerated. Sometimes, however, it is especially applied to the corrupting of the worship of God by the introduction of idolatrous practices. Thus, when the children of Israel caused Aaron to make a molten calf, "the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for the people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves." (See also Deut. xxxii. 5, Jud. ii. 19.) "And the earth was filled with violence," In the Targum it is rendered, "and the earth was filled with rapines."

This agrees with the rendering we have given of *Nephilim* in verse 4: "There were tyrants on the earth," these perpetrated all kinds of cruel acts. The depravity into which the human race had sunk had now reached the climax, there was no longer any fear of God, nor regard for man. Instead of "And the earth was corrupt," the Authorized Version has "The earth was also corrupt," which conveys the idea of being something supplemental to what has just previously been stated, but which does not harmonize with the context. The rendering which we have given is the literal one, and has also been adopted in the New Version.

12. *And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh has corrupted its way.*

"All flesh," that is, all mankind, spoken of in this manner either from their carnality, as here, or from their frail nature, as Is. xl. 6, 7,

"All flesh is grass,
And all goodliness thereof is as the flower of the fields,
The grass withereth and the flower fadeth."

Sometimes the expression "all flesh" is used to include also the animals, as will presently be shown. "Has corrupted his way;" the word דֶּרֶךְ (*derech*), way, is sometimes metaphorically used to denote the manner of life, and sometimes especially the true religion, or the mode of life which is pleasing to God. (See Exod. xxxii. 8, Deut. ix. 12, 16, Ps. v. 9, Is. ii. 3.)

13. *And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

"The end of all flesh is come before me," is not, as some have interpreted to mean, that "the consummation of all fleshliness

or depravity has come before me," but means the destruction of all flesh is decreed by me. The word קץ (*kets*) *end*, is very commonly used in the Scriptures in the sense of *death* or *destruction*. The expression בא לפני (*ba lephanai*) "is come before me" differs from בא אלי (*ba elai*) *is come unto me*; the former denotes *to come into the mind*, hence *to resolve*, *to decree*, the latter means *to come to my hearing or knowledge*. Thus, for instance, ch. xviii. 21, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me;" *which has come to my hearing or knowledge*, "and if not, I will know." So again, Exod. iii. 9; "And behold, the cry of the children of Israel; בא אלי (*ba elai*) is come unto me, i.e., *has come to my knowledge*. These and similar expressions we have already observed, are merely employed to depict in a forcible manner God's dealings with man, which could not possibly have been so forcibly conveyed in any other way, and belong to what is called anthropomorphism. "I will destroy them." In the original it is, "I am destroying them." In the Hebrew, like in the Greek, the participle is often employed where we would use the future. But the sacred writers very often specially speak of a future event as if already taken place to indicate thereby the certainty of their fulfilment. In their prophetic vision they see the events already passing before their eyes. "With the earth," that is, with everything that exists upon the earth, as cities, plants, &c.

14. *Make for thyself an ark of gopher wood; cells shalt thou make in the ark, and thou shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.*

The "ark" which Noah was commanded to build is, in Hebrew, called תבה (*tevak*), and occurs only as the name of Noah's ark, and the ark of bulrushes in which Moses was laid. (Exod. ii. 3, 5.) The etymology of the word is doubtful, but is supposed to be of Egyptian origin, a supposition which is favoured by the similarity to the ancient Egyptian word *thu*, i. e., *a chest*, and the Coptic word (*thevi*) *a chest*, and also it being the name given to the ark of bulrushes (rather of *papyrus*). The sacred ark in which the two tables of the law were deposited is called ארון (*aron*) i. e., *chest* or *ark*. The appellation תבה (*teva*) being applied only to *Noah's ark* and the *ark of bulrushes* in which Moses had been placed, shows that there must have existed some similarity between the two. Now the similarity did not exist in the material of which they were constructed, nor in the size, the only similarity, therefore, could have been in the shape. Noah's ark then was not *a ship* with a keel, as some writers have insisted upon, but a large flat-bottomed structure

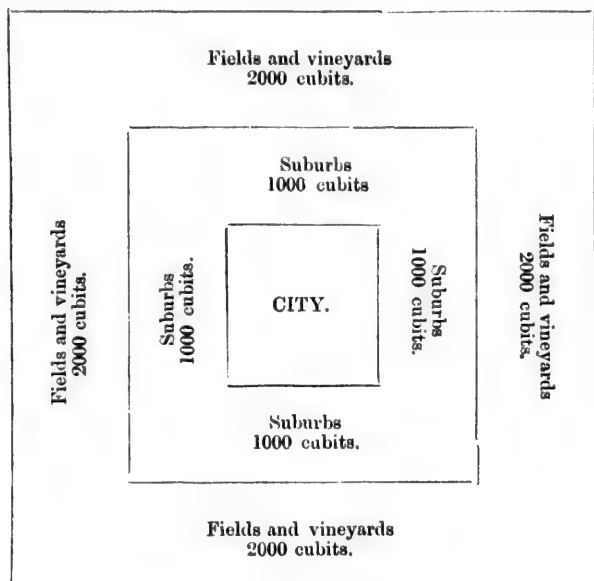
in the shape of a *chest*, not built with a view to sailing quality, but with a view to capacity. Hence in the Septuagint the term **הבה** (*tevah*), when used as an appellation of Noah's ark, is rendered **κιστός** a *chest* or *coffer*, and when applied to the ark of bulrushes, it is **θισή**, which is evidently derived from the Hebrew word. Had the ark been built in the form of a ship, it could not have rested on the dry land without falling over on one side, and thus would have endangered the lives of the inmates. Besides, in the instruction given to Noah as to the manner the ark was to be constructed no mention is made of either masts or rudder. There is, therefore, nothing in the sacred narrative to indicate that the ark was in the shape of a *ship*. It will probably be said, that such a huge flat-bottomed structure, three stories high, without masts, sails, and rudder, must have been altogether at the mercy of the winds and waves, we shall, however, hereafter show, that the ark was under God's special protection. Noah was commanded to build the ark of "gopher wood." The term **גפר** (*gopher*), occurs only in this place, and there is at present no tree existing of that name, no doubt, however, it denotes a tree that yields a resinous substance, such as the pine, cedar, fir, or cypress. Indeed, it is not at all improbable that it may have been an ancient name applied to all resinous trees. Hence we have the term **גפרית** (*gophriṭh*), *pitch* and other combustible substances; and also **כפר** (*copher*) *pitch*. Most likely it was the *cypress wood* of which the ark was built, for not only was it plentiful in Assyria, but was considered also as the most durable of all woods. Hence it was exclusively employed throughout Asia for ship building: in Egypt for mummy cases; and by the Athenians for coffins. The ark was to be constructed in **קנים** (*kinnim*) *cells*, the word literally denotes *nests*, but is evidently here used in the sense of *small compartments*. It was also to be pitched within and "without with pitch," to prevent any water entering it. The substance to be used for that purpose, is in Hebrew called **כפר** (*copher*) *pitch*, or *asphalt*, it is so named from **כפר** (*cuphar*) *to cover, to overlay*.

15. *And this is how thou shalt make it. The length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.*

The "cubit" is in Hebrew called **אמה** (*ammah*), a term also applied to the *fore-arm*, and the *cubit* was so-called, because originally it comprised the length from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger. Hence Moses speaks of it as "the cubit of a man."—(Deut. iii. 11.) The cubit is generally reckoned at 18 inches, though there are some writers who

make it equal to 21 inches. It is, indeed, quite probable that the Hebrews at a later period adopted or sometimes employed the "royal cubit" of the Babylonians, which was three inches longer than the ordinary cubit of the Hebrews. To such a cubit allusion seems to be made in Ezek. xliii. 13: "And these are the measures of the altar after the cubit: The cubit is a cubit and a hand breadth." Many commentators have supposed that there were two sorts of cubits used among the Hebrews, the *common cubit* of 18 inches, and the *sacred cubit* of 30 inches, and appeal in support of their opinion to Num. xxxv. 4, 5, "And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto Levites, shall be from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about. And ye shall measure without the city, for the east side two thousand cubits, for the south side two thousand cubits, and for the west side two thousand cubits, and for the north side two thousand cubits, and the city shall be in the midst." They maintain that the cubit in verse 4 was the common cubit, and that in verse 5 the sacred cubit. But even if it were so, it would not reconcile the apparently contradictory account. Besides, there is no trace whatever of the existence of a cubit of thirty inches measurement. Interpreters and critics have endeavoured to reconcile the apparent discrepancy in different ways. In the Septuagint the number *two thousand* is given in both verses, and Bochart, Kennicott, and other interpreters, have adopted the reading of that version, and suppose that the "one thousand," in verse 4, is an error in the Hebrew text. But why might not the number "two thousand" be an error in the Septuagint text? Was the text of the latter more zealously guarded against errors than the former? I think not. It cannot be urged that it might probably be a mistake of the transcribers, for the difference in expressing the two numerals is too great to mistake one for the other. Rosenmüller, and other writers, supposed that the "one thousand cubits" may be in length from the city, and the "two thousand cubits" in breadth on each side of the city. This is a much more reasonable mode of solving the difficulty. The explanation given, however, by the celebrated Rabbi Maimonides is by far preferable, and to my mind conclusive. "The suburbs," observes that famous Rabbi, "of the cities are said in the law to be three thousand cubits on every side from the wall of the city and outwards. The first thousand cubits are the suburbs, and the two thousand cubits, which they measured without the suburbs, were the fields and vineyards." This explanation of Maimonides has been accepted as highly satisfactory by most commentators, except by those whose prejudice will not allow them to see anything in the books of Moses but discrepancies and misstatements.

The following diagram will illustrate the explanation given by Maimonides :



If we now reckon the cubit at 18 inches, the dimensions of the ark would be, its length 450 feet ; its breadth 75 feet, and its height 45 feet.

It is here that the modern school of criticism begins to wage its warfare against the Mosaic account of the deluge. I say begins, for the truthfulness of every statement that follows is called in question. Dr. Kalish, an English commentator, who however, only echoes the sentiments of other neological writers, for instance, observes, "it has been proved, that, in an architectural point of view, such a vessel, which would be equivalent 'in capacity of storage, to eighteen of the largest ships in present use' is impossible ; an ark constructed in the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the Dutch Menonite Janson, after the stated dimensions, broke into pieces before it was completed ; though a ship built in the same proportions, but much smaller dimensions (120 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 12 feet high), proved successful." (Com. on Genesis, p. 180.)

This undertaking of the Menonite Janson is also brought forward by Von Bohlen (Com. on Gen. p. 86) and many other writers of the rationalistic school as a proof against the

credibility of the Mosaic narrative. But supposing there had been a hundred similar attempts made, and all had proved a failure, would that in any way affect the truthfulness of the sacred narrative? I say not in the least. It is quite possible that if Noah himself had undertaken to build such a structure of his own accord it would have proved a failure also. But the sacred narrative informs us that God not only commanded Noah to build the ark, but he was likewise instructed how he was to construct it. God Himself, therefore, was the architect of the ark, and it was built under His direct guidance, and for His service; under such circumstances failure was impossible.

16. *A light thou shalt make for the ark, and to a cubit thou shalt finish it from above; and a door thou shalt make in the side of it; with lower, second, and third stories thou shalt make it.*

"A light shalt thou make," or it may be rendered "light shalt thou make;" the Hebrew word here employed is צֹהַר (*tsohar*) and is the only place where it occurs in the singular. But the meaning of the word is easily established from its use with the dual form צֹהָרִים (*tsohorayim*) denoting *double light*, i.e., the brightest or strongest light, hence noonday. What is meant here is *an opening* for admitting light and air. Or the word may be used here collectively, denoting *lights*; so that there may have been a *number of such openings* in different parts of the ark. In the Authorized Version it is rendered "a window shalt thou make," but in the Revised Version it has very properly been translated "a light shalt thou make." From ch. viii. 6, it would appear that the ark was furnished besides also with windows, for it is said there that "Noah opened חֹלֹן (*challon*) the window," which, as the reader will perceive, is quite a different word from that used in our verse, and indeed is the ordinary word for window. (Comp. Gen. xxvi. 8, Josh. ii. 15.) There is, therefore, no necessity to suppose, as many commentators have done, that there was only one window in the ark, which would have been altogether insufficient for such a large structure. Rabbi Kimchi, and whose opinion has also been espoused by Luther and some other interpreters, very erroneously suppose that only Noah's apartment was provided with a window, and that the animals remained in the dark, our text, as we have shown, admits of a more reasonable interpretation. "And to a cubit thou shalt finish it, from above," that is, the light was to be so constructed as to extend within a cubit to the edge of the roof. The eaves very probably projected sufficiently to prevent the rain from entering. "And a door thou shalt make in the side of it;" the Hebrew word here for "door" is פֶּתַח

(*pethach*) which primarily signifies *an opening*, but is also used in the sense of *an entrance* or doorway either of a house or tent, and sometimes its meaning is extended to denote *a door*, which, however, is commonly expressed by דלת (*deleth*) i.e., *a door hanging and turning on hinges*. The word פתח (*pethach*) is probably here to be taken collectively in the sense *entrances* which Noah was to make, namely, *an entrance* to each story, by which everything could be readily and conveniently brought in and taken out. These entrances could, of course, after every thing had been brought in, be easily closed up.

Calmet, in his Dictionary of the Bible, under the article Noah's Ark, remarks: "After the nicest examination and computation, and taking the dimensions with the greatest geometrical exactness, the most learned and accurate calculators, and those most conversant in building of ships, conclude, that if the ablest mathematicians had been consulted about proportioning the several apartments in the ark, they could not have done it with greater correctness than Moses has done; and this narrative in the sacred history is so far from furnishing deists with arguments wherewith to weaken the authority of the Holy Scriptures that, on the contrary, it supplies good arguments to confirm that authority; since it seems, in a manner, impossible for a man, in Noah's time, when navigation was not perfected, by his own wit and invention, to discover such accuracy and regularity of proportion as is remarkable in the dimensions of the ark, it follows that the correctness must be attributed to Divine inspiration and a supernatural direction. (Wilkins's Essay towards a Real Character, part ii. cap. 5; Saurin, Discours Historique, Tom. i. pp. 87, 88)."

17. *And I, behold, I am bringing the flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under the heaven; every thing that is on the earth shall die.*

"And I, behold, I am bringing," as much as to say, the flood by which I purpose "to destroy all flesh" will not be owing to natural causes, but will be brought about by My omnipotence. It was to be unlike any inundation that ever may have been before or will be hereafter, and hence the term מַבּוּל (*Mabbul*), by which Noah's flood is designated in the original, is never used in reference to any other flood. Luther, in his German version, very appropriately rendered the Hebrew term by "*Sündfluth*," i. e., sin-flood, which at once expresses the cause of the flood. The Sanscrit designation is *sint-vluot*, i. e., universal flood. The term מַבּוּל (*Mabbul*) occurs only once more in the Old Testament besides in the narrative of the deluge, namely, Ps. xxix. 10:

"The LORD sat* as King at the flood;
Yea the LORD sitteth King forever."

The flood here spoken of is Noah's flood, and the Psalmist declares among other mighty deeds of God, that He sat as king at the time of the flood in judgment upon the world, and sitteth as King for ever. In the Authorized Version, the first line is rendered, "The LORD sitteth upon the flood," which does not convey an intelligible meaning. Besides, "upon the flood," is not a proper rendering of *לְמַבּוּל* (*lunabbul*); the preposition *לְ* indicates the time *at* or *in* which an event takes place. Thus Gen. viii. 2, "and the dove came to him *לְעֵת עֶרֶב* (*le-eth erev*) at even tide." In the Revised Version, however, it is rendered in the same manner as I have rendered it.

18. *But I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou and thy sons, thy wife, and thy sons wives with thee.*

"I will establish my covenant with thee"; the covenant which God established with Noah, was a solemn promise given to him, that he and his family should safely enter the ark. A covenant, however, generally implies the mutual agreement of parties faithfully to carry out certain stipulations, and in this case the conditions would be, that Noah on his part would in faith implicitly carry out the instructions which God had given him in regard to the building of the ark, and the bringing of the living creatures into it, together with all kinds of food necessary to preserve them alive. It is evident from ch. ix. 9 to 17, that "the covenant" in our verse has only reference to the delivery of Noah's family from the flood, for we learn there that immediately on the coming out of the ark, God was pleased to establish a more general and lasting covenant with Noah and his seed.

The Hebrew term for covenant is *בְּרִית* (*berith*) and is derived from the verb *בָּרַח* (*barah*) to cut asunder, also to eat, and is so called from the most ancient mode of contracting a solemn covenant or contract which was done by cutting an animal which may be used for sacrifice in two parts, and the contracting parties then passed between the two portions. It is highly probable, that a portion of the victim thus cut up, was sacrificed and the rest was feasted upon by the parties making the covenant. Hence we find, from very early times, it was customary among the Hebrews, that parties concluding a covenant eat together. (See Gen. xxxi. 54.) In Gen. xv. 9,

* Sometimes, though not very frequently, there is an ellipsis in the *first line* which has to be supplied from the *second line* to complete the parallelism; much more frequently, however, an ellipsis occurs in the *second line*, and has to be supplied from the *first line*.

et seq., where God made a promise to Abraham he commanded him to take certain victims and divide them into halves, and when the sun went down, "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between the pieces." The smoking furnace and the burning lamp were the symbols of the Divine presence, and in this instance the Divine glory alone passed between the portions, for the promise of bestowing certain favour was altogether on the part of God. The prophet Jeremiah also, alludes to this ceremony of forming a covenant. 'And I will give the men that have transgressed My covenant, which have not performed the words of My covenant which they made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the two parts thereof.' (Ch. xxxiv. 18.) Later, apparently a more inexpensive mode was adopted, namely merely by partaking of salt. Baron da Tott relates, that 'Valdavanji Pasha was desirous of an acquaintance with me, and seeming to regret that his business would not permit him to stay long, he departed, promising in a short time to return. I had already accompanied him half way down the staircase, when he suddenly stopped and turning briskly to one of my domestics who followed me said, '*bring me directly some bread and salt.*' I was not less surprised at this fancy, than at the haste which was made to obey him. What he requested was brought, when, *taking a little salt between his two fingers, and putting it with a mysterious air on a bit of bread he eat it with a devout gravity, assuring me that I might now rely on him.* I soon procured an explanation of this ceremony." The Baron states further in a note, that, "The Turks consider it the blackest ingratitude to forget the man from whom we have received food; which is signified by *the bread and salt* in this ceremony." (Trav. part i. p. 214, Eng. edit.)

The Arabs, too, eat bread and salt together in concluding a covenant, and hence they say, "*There is salt between us,*" that is, there is covenant between us. This custom of partaking of salt in making a *solemn promise* or *covenant*, no doubt originated from its cleansing and preserving qualities, it was thus used as a symbol that the covenant was to be lasting. This will explain also why the offerings were to be seasoned with salt, as the symbol of the perpetual covenant between God and his chosen people. "And every oblation of thy meal offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meal offering: with all thy oblations thou shalt offer salt." (Lev. ii. 13.) Hence we have also the expression *ברית מלח* (*berith melach*) *a covenant of salt*. "All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given

thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, as a due for ever: it is ברית מלח עולם (*berith meluch olam*) a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee, and to thy seed with thee." (Num. xviii. 19.) So again 2 Chr. xiii. 5, "Ought ye not to know that the LORD, the God of Israel, gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt." That is as an *inviolable covenant*. The heathens among other things no doubt borrowed the use of salt with their sacrifices from the Hebrews. Corn mixed with salt, apparently were used in sacrifices. (See Homer Il. i. lin. 449, 458, Odyss iii. lin. 441.) Pliny observes too, "But the influence of salt is thought to be greatest in sacrifices, since none are performed without the salt-meal." Nat. Hist. li. xxx. cap. 41.) Barthelmy D'Herbelot in his celebrated work the *Bibliothèque Orientale*, p. 466, gives a remarkable instance of the power of the covenant of salt over the mind. He relates, that "Jacoub ben Laith, the founder of a dynasty of Persian princes called the Saffarides, rising, like many others of the ancestors of the princes of the East, from a very low state to royal power, being in his first setting out in the use of arms, no better than a freebooter or robber, is yet said to have maintained some regard to decency in his depredations, and never to have stripped those that he robbed, always leaving them something to soften their affliction. Among other exploits that are recorded of him, he is said to have broken into the palace of the prince of that country, and having collected a very large booty, which he was on the point of carrying away, he found his foot kicked something which made him stumble; he imagined it might be something of value, and putting it to his mouth, the better to distinguish what it was, his tongue soon informed him it was a lump of salt. Upon this, according to the morality, or rather superstition of the country, where the people considered salt as a *symbol and pledge of hospitality*, he was so touched, that he left all his booty, retiring without taking any thing away with him. The next morning, the risk they had run of losing many valuable things being perceived, great was the surprise and strict the inquiry, what could be the occasion of their being left, at length Jacoub was found to be the person concerned; who having given an account, very sincerely, of the whole transaction to the prince, he gained his esteem so effectually, that it might be said with truth, that it was his *regard for salt* that laid the foundation of his after-fortune. The prince employing him as a man of courage and genius in many enterprises and finding him successful in all of them, he raised him little by little, to the chief post among his troops; so that, at the prince's death, he found himself possessed of the command

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in chief, and had such interest in their affections, that they preferred him to those of the children of the deceased prince, and he became *absolute master* of that province, from whence he afterwards spread his conquests far and wide." (See also Harmer's Observations.) Salt being among Eastern nations the symbol of hospitality and friendship, this will illustrate the passage in Ezra iv. 14: "Now because we have eaten the salt of the palace," it is, because we receive our maintenance from the King. Harmer mentions an instance of a modern Persian monarch upbraiding an unfaithful servant: "I have then such ungrateful servants and traitors as these to eat my salt." (Observations, Vol. iv. p. 458.) Tamerlane (Timur, also called Timur-Leng from his lameness), one of the great conquerors whom Central Asia sent forth in the middle ages, in his "Institutions," tells of one Share Behrbaum who had left his service and joined the enemy. "At length," he goes on to say, "*my salt, which he had eaten*, overwhelmed him with remorse; he again threw himself on my mercy, and humbled himself before me."

"Thy wife," the name of Noah's wife is not mentioned in Scripture; traditions, however, have assigned to her different names. According to the book of Adam her name was Haikal, daughter of Abaraz. This name is assigned to her by other ancient writers, but make her the daughter of Namus. Both Abaraz and Namus are said to have been sons of Enos. Epiphanius calls her *Bath Enos*, i. e., the daughter of Enos. By other writers she is called Nuraito, which seems to be derived from the Chaldee נִר (nur) *fire*. Some Egyptologists suppose to have discovered the name of Noah's wife upon an obelisk of the son Amenemes (of the eleventh dynasty) in the valley of Faioum, where she is called תמר (Tamar) *a palm tree*.

19. *And of every living being, of all flesh, two of every sort, shalt thou bring into the ark to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.*

20. *Of the fowls after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every sort, shall come to thee to keep them alive.*

We have here again to face the contentions of the rationalistic and infidel writers, who strenuously persist that the statement in these verses, "two of every sort," contains a "manifest contradiction" to what is stated ch. vii. 2: "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thyself by sevens, the male and its female." We may here again quote the eminent English commentator Kalisch, whose remarks will serve as a sample of the sentiments entertained upon the subject by the writers of

the new school of criticism. He observes on ch. vii. 2, 3: "Noah was commanded to take into the ark seven pair of all clean, and one pair of all unclean animals, whereas he had before been ordered to take *one* pair of every species (vi. 19, 20,) no distinction whatever between clean and unclean animals having there been made. All the attempts at arguing away this discrepancy have been utterly unsuccessful. The difficulty is so obvious that the most desperate efforts have been made." And a little further on he remarks: "We do not hesitate to acknowledge here the manifest contradiction as we have avowed it in the history of the Creation (Com. on Gen. p. 183)." This alleged discrepancy is accounted for by the same stereotyped argument as all the other fancied discrepancies, by supposing different authorships, one account being taken from the *Jehovistic*, and the other from the *Elohistic* documents. For my part, I am at a loss to see that any "desperate efforts" are required to reconcile these two statements. The two passages, if considered with the context in which they stand, seem to me perfectly clear. God having, in verse 18, declared to Noah that He would establish a covenant with him, and that he and his family should come into the ark to be preserved from the deluge, enjoins him, in verses 19, 20, to bring "two of every *sort*" of all the living creatures with him. The statement, "two of every *sort*," here simply means that they were in all cases to be a *male and a female*, without any reference as to the *number* of the pairs. If we now turn to ch. vii. 1, we read there that God commanded Noah to enter the ark with his family, and in connection with this command he is further enjoined in verse 2 as to the precise number of the animals he was to bring with him, namely, that they were not all only to be one pair, but of the clean animals he was to take "by sevens." This more explicit direction, I maintain, is only appropriately given in connection with the command to enter the ark, and does not contradict the preceding statement, but is merely a more specified repetition of it. Our adverse critics lay much stress upon the absurd explanations some commentators have resorted to in their endeavour to reconcile the two statements, such as for example, the second and third verses of chapter seven, being "an interpolation of some pious Jew," or that "*one pair* came to Noah spontaneously, whilst *six pair* were brought by himself," as some of the Rabbinic writers have explained. But such erroneous explanations prove no more a discrepancy, than the wrong interpretation of a statute by some judges would prove its inconsistency. Men will sometimes err in their judgments, and whilst some will be wrong in their views, others will be right.

22. *And Noah did according to all God had commanded him, so he did.*

The building of such an immense structure as the ark must necessarily have involved a vast amount of labour and expense, whilst the purpose for which it was designed, no doubt constantly subjected him to the scoffing and ridicule of the unbelievers, who would scoffingly ask him whereso much water could come from to drown all the living things; a question which is so constantly repeated in our days, by those who refuse to believe anything except what they themselves can account for. But "Noah did according to all that God commanded him," for, as the apostle Paul said, "By faith Noah being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." (Hob. xi. 7.) According to some of the Patristic writers Noah was a hundred years building the ark, but according to some of the Rabbinic writers he occupied one hundred and twenty years, and during all that time he also preached repentance, and warned his contemporaries of their certain destruction if they persisted in their evil ways. But all his efforts proved of no avail; not even one would listen to the pious patriarch's warnings. What a fearful spectacle of unbelief and hardness of heart we have here exhibited, not even one could be induced to flee from the wrath to come and be saved!

CHAPTER VII.

1. *And the LORD said to Noah, come thou and all thy house into the Ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.*

Bishop Hall has justly remarked: "What a wonder of mercy is this that I here see! One poor family called out of a world, and as it were, eight grains of corn fanned from a whole barnful of chaff."

The one hundred and twenty years of grace were ended, and the day of punishment had arrived, and Noah is commanded to enter the ark with his family. The ark had been finished and stored with provisions, yet Noah did not show any undue haste to enter it. He had implicit faith that when the proper time had arrived he would be directed to do so. It appears from verses, 10, 13, that the very day that Noah entered the ark, "the waters of the flood began to be upon the earth." He

had no doubt to the very last moment exhorted the people to repent of their sins, in the hope that some might yet be saved.

2. *Of every clean beast thou shalt take unto thee by sevens, the male and its female ; and of the beasts which are not clean two, the male and its female.*

3. *Also of the fowls of the air, by sevens, the male and female : to preserve seed alive upon the face of the earth.*

Critics are not agreed upon whether the expression "by sevens" is to be understood *three pairs and one odd one*, or whether it means *seven pairs*. The former opinion is held by Calvin, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Tuch, Delitzsch, and other critics, whilst the latter supposition is maintained by Eben Ezra, Kimchi, and other Jewish critics, and also by many modern commentators as Michaelis, Kalisch, Dillman, Von Bohlen, and other critics. The expression שבעה שבעה (*shivah shivah*) *seven seven* in the text, unquestionably favours the supposition that it means *seven pairs*, for distributive numbers are according to the usage of the language expressed by a repetition of the cardinals, thus again in verse 9, שנים שנים (*shenayim shenayim*) *by twos, or two by two*, if seven single ones had been meant, the numeral *seven* would only have been once expressed. The larger number of clean animals that were to be preserved in the ark, was a wise and merciful provision of the Almighty as these were required for sacrifice and also to serve for food, and therefore a more rapid increase was necessary.

We are asked, how did Noah obtain the information as to which animals were to be considered clean and which unclean, in as much as the dietary laws were not promulgated until upward of sixteen centuries afterwards ? The reply is, that by "clean animals" are here most probably to be understood only such as were permitted to be used for sacrifice. Now as sacrifices had been offered in Adam's family, it is reasonable to infer that our first parent had been instructed by God as to what animals are acceptable to Him, as well as to the manner in which they were to be offered up. This information would, of course, be handed down from family to family. If, however, as some commentators suppose, "the clean animals were precisely those which were later permitted for food." (Lev. xi., Deut. xiv.), then we must infer, that the antediluvian patriarchs obtained the information by inspiration.

4. *For in yet seven days, I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will destroy every living being which I have made, from off the face of the earth.*

Seven days were allowed for Noah to bring the animals into the ark; and there was yet an opportunity offered for repentance. During these few remaining days of grace, Noah, no doubt, unremittingly exhorted the people not to persist in their unbelief, and pointed to the closing scene of the embarkation of the animals as a proof, that their punishment was near at hand. But it was all of no avail, instead of showing any contrition, they probably merely laughed at the credulity of Noah, and ridiculed the idea of such a catastrophe as a deluge taking place, which would sweep every living thing from the face of the earth. "Forty days and forty nights;" as the numeral *seven* became remarkable from the six days creation and the seventh day in which God rested, so the number *forty* became afterwards remarkable from the forty days and forty nights during which the rain descended upon the earth. Thus we read that Moses was forty days and forty nights upon the mountain; the Israelites wandered forty years in the wilderness; Elijah, when he fled from Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, who threatened to take his life, was, during his journey to Beersheba, and from thence into Arabia Petrea, miraculously supported during forty days and forty nights; forty days respite was given to the inhabitants of Nineveh to repent; Christ fasted forty days. "I will destroy every living being;" in the original it is *כל היקום* (*col haikum*), *every standing being*; that is every *being* that through the principle of life is capable of maintaining an erect posture. This expression occurs only again in verse 23, and Deut. xi. 6.

6. *And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water was upon the earth.*

"Six hundred years old;" in the original it is, "a son of six hundred years. The Hebrews regarded man as the child of time, in which he is brought up, and his character formed; time too, continually produces physical changes on the human frame; hence in speaking of the age of a person, they always said he was *the son or daughter* of so many years. Thus in ch xvii. 17, Sarah is spoken of as being "ninety years old," in the original it is "*בת* (*bath*), *a daughter of ninety years*."

11. *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day, were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

"In the second month." The ancient Hebrews apparently had no names for their months; in speaking of them they distinguished them by numerals, as the first, the second, &c.; and in this manner does Moses speak of them throughout the Pentateuch. Even in the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel, the same method still occurs. Moses called the month in which the Israelites came out of Egypt *Abib*, i. e., an ear of grain; but we meet with no other names of months, until the reign of Solomon. Thus, 1 Kings vi. 1, we read of the month of "Zid," and in verse 38, of the month of "Bul," and in ch. viii. 2, of the month of "Ethanim."

Critics differ in their opinions as to the origin of the present Hebrew names of the months. Some think that Solomon borrowed them from the Phœnicians, others think they came from the Chaldeans, whilst Hardouin maintains an Egyptian origin. As the names were not in common use among the Hebrews before the Babylonian captivity, it is most likely that the Israelites adopted them from the Chaldeans.

The ancient Hebrews began their year about the time of the autumnal equinox, and the first month is now called *Tishri*. It is on the first and second days of this month that the Jews still celebrate their *New Year*.

The seventeenth day of the second month on which the deluge is said to have commenced answers to about the 6th November.

Afterwards in commemoration of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, the month in which the event took place was constituted to be the first month of the year. "This month *shall be* to you the beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you." (Exod. xii. 2.) Hence after that time the ecclesiastical year commenced with this month, from which all the festivals were regulated. Moses, as we stated, called the month *אביב* (*Abib*) i. e., an ear of corn, but its present name is *ניסן* (*Nisan*) i. e., the flower month.

Thus we see, the Hebrew calendar has a double New Year, the civil year beginning on the first day of *תשרי* (*Tishri*) for civil transactions, and the ecclesiastical year beginning on the first day of *Nisan* for the regulation of the religious festivals.

From our verse we learn further that the waters of the flood were not produced by rain merely, but that "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," this language seems to imply that wherever waters were kept in their place by the omnipotence of the

* *תשרי* (*Tishri*) the name seems to be derived from the Chaldean verb *שרא* (*shera*) to begin, to open. This month answers to part of September and part of October, whilst the month *Nisan* answers to part of March and part of April.

Almighty were now let loose. The term **הַחַיִּים** (*tehom*) denotes a large body of raging water, as *the sea or ocean*, also the great subterranean body of waters, called the *abyss or the deep*. The expression **הַחַיִּים רַבָּה** (*tehom rabbah*) "great deep," denotes *the fathomless deep*. "The windows of heaven"; the Hebrew term for "windows" here employed is **אַרְבּוּת** (*arubboth*) which denotes windows made of lattice work. In the Septuagint the word is rendered *καταρᾶται cataracts*. The language is evidently figurative, meaning that the waters were made to come down in torrents, or like water-spouts, every obstacle having been removed. Job says:

"He (God) bindeth up the waters in His thick clouds;
And the cloud is not rent under them."—(Ch. xxvi. 8.)

The bands which held the waters were now broken, and the water was allowed to gush down unrestrained.

The word for "rain" employed in our verse is not **מָטָר** (*matar*) which denotes ordinary rain, but **גֶּשֶׁם** (*geshem*) heavy or violent rain. Surely, our adverse critics cannot have given full consideration to the language in our verse, or the quantity of water would not have proved a stumbling block to them.

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13. *On the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark.*

This precise language is intended to teach, in the first place, that the earth after the flood was again re-peopled by Noah's family and none other, and in the second place, that monogamy was strictly observed in the family of Noah.

16. *And those that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him. And the LORD closed round about him.*

"And the LORD closed round about him," that is, the LORD protected him on all sides from any danger that might threaten him, or in other words, the ark and its inmates were now taken under God's special care and protection. In the Authorized Version, it is rendered, "and the LORD shut him in," and the same rendering is also given in the Revised Version: this rendering has subjected the passage to much cavilling at the hands of the opponents of Scripture, who sneeringly ask, "where the necessity was for a Divine interposition in performing so simple an act as the shutting of a door?" Surely, they say, "Noah, who was able to build such a structure, was also able to make a door which he could shut himself after he had entered." Kalisch renders, "And the LORD closed behind him;" and, so, many German interpreters. The Chaldee Version,

however, though not giving a literal translation, unquestionably gives the proper meaning of the passage by rendering: "And the LORD protected about him." A similar rendering of this passage is adopted by many German commentators. Thus, for instance, Samson Hirsch, Rabbi to the Israelitish Religious Society at Frankfort on the Main, renders: "And God closed protectingly (*um ihm*) about him." And he remarks upon the passage, "Although Noah had done every thing, his safety was still not assured; he had done what he was commanded, but it was the Divine protection afterwards that shielded him. What this protection consisted of, what God did for him, is related in the following verses: (Com. on Genesis, p. 144.)

The primary signification of the preposition **בַּעַד** (*baad* and *baäd*), and in which sense it is commonly used is, *about* or *round about*, and, therefore, there is not only no philological objection to rendering the passage **וַיִּסְגֹּר יְהוָה בַּעַד נֹחַ** (*waiyisgor Jehovah baälo*) "And the LORD shut around about him," but this rendering gives the primary meaning of the words. In Job i. 10, we have a similar expression. Satan replies to God: "Hast thou not **שָׂכַח בַּעַד נֹחַ** (*suchta baädo*) lit. hedged about him," it is protected him on all sides. The Psalmist says, "But Thou, O Lord art **מִגֵּן בַּעַדִּי** (*magen baädi*) a shield about me." (Ps. iii.

4.) I do not mean to say that **בַּעַד** (*baad*) is not used sometimes in the sense *behind*, but the context will, in those cases, indicate that it must be so rendered.

But there is another important circumstance which must be taken into consideration in interpreting our passage. The Scriptures, indeed, contain numerous instances of God graciously interposing His Divine power for the accomplishment of certain ends, yet in not a single instance was that power exercised so long as the end could be obtained by natural means. Dr. Chalmers very properly remarked: "It is remarkable that God is sparing of miracles, and seems to prefer the ordinary process of nature, if equally effectual, for the accomplishment of his purposes. * * In short, He dispenses with miracles when they are not requisite for the fulfilment of His ends. (Daily Scripture Readings, vol. 1, p. 10.) Now, as the closing of the ark after Noah had entered did not actually require a supernatural intervention, it is only reasonable to conclude that the sacred writer refers in our passage to a circumstance where a miraculous interposition was absolutely necessary. And this circumstance we have in God surrounding the ark with His Divine protection to shield its inmates from all danger. And there was indeed great danger of the ark being violently assaulted by the desparate multitudes when they saw the waters

constantly increasing upon them, who would naturally make a rush for the ark in the hope of saving themselves, and in their frenzy would have recourse to all kinds of violence. In such an assault Noah and his family would have been powerless, here supernatural aid alone could protect them.

17. *And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased and bore up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth.*

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"And the flood was forty days upon the earth;" that is, the waters continually increased during that time, and reached the height stated in verse twenty, at which height it then remained for 150 days, as stated in verse twenty-four.

19. *And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains which are under the whole heaven were covered.*

20. *Fifteen cubits above them the waters prevailed; and the mountains were covered.*

In these two verses we are brought face to face with the exceedingly difficult question, whether our text speaks merely of a partial, or of a universal flood. The question has given rise to a vast amount of discussion, which is not confined to commentators and critics only, but is participated in also by scientists. Until the close of the last century, the universality of the Noachian deluge was universally maintained; and the same opinion is still entertained by the largest number of modern writers who have treated on the subject. They hold that by the expressions, "all the high mountains," "under the whole heaven" Moses clearly wishes to indicate that the whole earth was covered by the waters of the flood. There are, however, many eminent writers who, on the contrary, maintain that these expressions do not necessarily imply a universal deluge, since "by a sort of metonymy common in the East, a considerable part is spoken of as a whole, though in reality often greatly less than a moiety of the whole." There are quite a number of passages in the Scriptures which prove the existence of such a mode of expression during the Bible times, and modern travellers frequently speak of its existence still among the Eastern people. As this is an important point—for it will show that, so far as the language in the text is concerned, there is nothing that will militate against the theory of a partial deluge—we will here refer to some of those passages, and in order to indicate more distinctly the similarity of the expressions to those in our text we will give them in italics. In Gen. xli. 56, 57, it is said, "And the famine was over *all the face of the earth.*" * * "And all

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countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn." By the expression "all the face of the earth," can here only be meant Egypt and the countries bordering upon it. In Exod. ix. 25, we read: "And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt *all that was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote *every* herb of the field." Let the reader now notice the words "*all*," "*every*" in the above passage and then turn to ch. x. 14, 15, where we read, "And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the borders of Egypt; very grievous *were they*; * * and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left." It will be seen that the expressions "all" "every" in ch. ix. 25, can only mean a great portion. So in Deut. ii. 25, God promises the Israelites: "This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the peoples that are *under the whole heaven*, who shall hear the report of thee." "By the peoples under the whole heaven" we have evidently to understand the surrounding nations, and those who may hear of the great wonders which God had performed for his chosen people.

In Isa. ch. xiv. 26, we read: "This is the purpose that is purposed *upon the whole earth*"; but the context shows that this declaration is directed only against Assyria. We may now refer to a few passages in the New Testament. In the Gospel of St. Luke, ch. ii. 1, we read: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that *all the world* should be taxed;" but "*all the world*" here can only mean, so much of it as was then subject to the Roman Empire. In Acts ii. 5 it is said: "And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of *every nation under heaven*;" but, according to verses 9, 10, these Jews only came from countries extending as far as Italy on the one hand, and the Persian Gulf on the other, hardly equal to one-fiftieth part of our globe. The expression "under heaven" must, therefore, be taken in the limited sense as indicated by the context. Again, Col. i. 23, it is said that the Gospel had been "*preached to every creature under heaven*," but the expression "under heaven" can only mean here so far as the Gospel had then been preached among the civilized nations. We may now refer to a secular writer. Josephus says: "And Strabo himself bears witness to the same thing in another place; that at the same time that Sylla passed over into Greece in order to fight against Mithridates, he sent Lucullus to put an end to a sedition that our nation, of whom *the habitable earth is full*, had raised in Cyrene." (Ant. B. xiv. ch. vii. par. 2.) Agrippa, in his speech to the Jews to dissuade them from making war against the Romans, says, "for there is no people upon *the habitable earth*

which have not some portion of you among them." (Wars of the Jews B. ii. ch. xvi. par. 4.) These are *hyperbolical expressions*, and must no more be taken in a literal sense than the statement of cities "*walled up to heaven*," (Deut. i. 28), which only means cities with very high walls; or the statement that there were among the Benjamites who went out to battle against the children of Israel, "seven hundred chosen men left-handed; every one could sling stones *at an hair breadth*, and not miss," which is only intended to convey the idea that these men were exceedingly expert in slinging stones. Such hyperboles are very common among the Eastern people, and especially in the writings of Arabian authors. From the foregoing remarks it will be seen, that the language in our text does not absolutely imply that the Nochaic deluge was universal.

It is, however, urged against the hypothesis of a local deluge, that "if the waters of the deluge rose fifteen cubits above the mountains of Ararat, the level must have been high enough to give universality to the deluge, and mountains of similar altitude in other parts of the globe must have been equally covered." This argument, at first sight, certainly appears to be of such a nature as not easily to be gotten over. But there are circumstances connected with the theory of a universal flood which are just as difficult to reconcile. But here we must not lose sight of the fact, that the Scriptures do not represent the deluge as having been a natural occurrence, but brought about by the omnipotence of the Almighty. God, indeed, employed—as in many other miracles recorded in the Scriptures—natural means so far as they could contribute to accomplish the end; but when they failed supernatural means were resorted to. Who can comprehend the full meaning of the expressions, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened?" Who can tell what immense changes this violent breaking up of "the fountains of the great deep" may not have produced in the configuration of the country where the flood took place. "In 1819 a wide expanse of country in the delta of the Indus, containing fully two thousand square miles of flat meadow, was converted by a sudden depression of the land, accompanied by an earthquake, into an inland sea; the tower of a small fort, which occupied nearly the middle of the sunken area, and on which many of the inhabitants of a neighbouring village succeeded in saving themselves, may still be seen raising its shattered head over the surface, the only object visible in a waste of waters of which the eye fails to determine the extent. About three years after this event, a tract of country interposed between the foot of the Andes and the Pacific, more than equal in area to all Great Britain, was elevated from two to

seven feet over its former level, and rocks laid bare in the sea, which pilots and fishermen of the coast had never before seen." (Hugh Miller's *Testimony of the Rocks*, pp. 312, 313.) There are many accounts of such local changes having taken place from time to time from various causes.

Dr. Barret, who was the first that succeeded in reaching the summit of mount Ararat in 1829, gives the perpendicular height of the great Ararat as 16,264 Paris feet above the level of the sea, and 13,350 above the plain of Araxes, and that of the little Ararat as 12,284 above the sea, and 9,561 above the plain. It is, of course, impossible to conceive how the waters could reach twenty-two feet above Ararat without making the flood universal, unless by a direct miracle by which the waters were restrained from overflowing other countries not inhabited by human beings—which, after all, would be no greater miracle than the dividing of the Red Sea so that "the Children of Israel went through the sea upon dry ground; and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left"—or by some great and sudden subsistence of the land which may have been caused by the breaking up of the fountains of the deep, as well as by the pouring down of the waters through the windows of heaven. This sudden subsistence of the land may have been accomplished by an inrush of the waters of the Persian Gulf, similar to what occurred in the Runn of Cutch on the eastern arm of the Indus in 1819, of which we have already spoken. Hugh Miller, who strongly advocates the theory of a partial flood, illustrates his theory as follows: "Let us suppose," says that distinguished geologist, "that the human family, still amounting to several millions, though greatly reduced by exterminating wars and exhausting vices, were congregated in that tract of country which extending eastwards from the modern Ararat to far beyond the Sea of Aral, includes the original Caucasian centre of the race; let us suppose, that the hour of judgment having at length arrived, the land began gradually to sink, as the tract in the Runn of Cutch sank in the year 1819, or as the tract in the southern part of North America, known as the "sunk country" sank in the year 1821; further, let us suppose that the depression took place slowly and equably for forty days together, at the rate of about 400 feet per day—a rate not twice greater than that at which the tide rises in the Straits of Magellan, and which would have rendered itself apparent as but a persistent inward flowing of the sea; let us yet further suppose, that from mayhap some volcanic outburst coincident with the depression, and an effect of the same deep-seated cause, the atmosphere was so effected, that heavy drenching rains continued to descend during the whole time, and that, though they could contribute

but little to the actual volume of the flood,—at most only some five or six inches per day,—they at least *seemed* to constitute one of its main causes, and added greatly to its terrors, by swelling the rivers, and rushing downwards in torrents from the hills. The depression which, extending to the Euxine Sea and the Persian Gulf on the one hand, and the Gulf of Finland on the other, would open up by three separate channels the fountains of the great deep, and which included, let us suppose, an area of about two thousand miles each way, would, at the end of the fortieth day, be sunk in its centre to the depth of sixteen thousand feet,—a depth sufficiently profound to bury the loftiest mountains of the district; and yet, having a gradient of declination of but sixteen feet per mile, the cantour of its hills and plains would remain apparently what they had been before,—the doomed inhabitants would see but the water rising along the mountain sides, and one refuge after another swept away, till the last witness of the scene would have perished, and the last hill top would have disappeared. And when after a hundred and fifty days had come and gone, the depressed hollow would have begun slowly to rise,—and when, after the fifth month had passed, the ark would have grounded on the summit of Mount Ararat,—all that could have been seen from the upper window of the vessel would be simply a boundless sea, roughened by tides, now flowing outwards, with a reversed course, towards the distant ocean, by the three great outlets which, during the period of depression, had given access to the waters. Noah would of course see that ‘the fountains of the deep were stopped,’ and ‘the waters returning from off the earth continually;’ but whether the deluge had been partial or universal, he could neither see nor know.” (Test. of the Rocks, pp. 358, 359.)

The question is asked by those who hold the theory of a universal flood: “If the deluge were but local, what need was there of taking *birds* into the ark; and among them birds so widely diffused as the raven and the dove? A deluge which could overspread the region which these birds inhabit could hardly have been less than universal. If the deluge were local, and all the birds of these kinds in that district perished, though we should think they might have fled to the uninundated regions—it would have been useless to encumber the ark with them, seeing that the birds of the same species which survived in the lands not overflowed would speedily replenish the uninundated tract as soon as the water subsided.” “This reasoning,” Hugh Miller says, “is mainly based upon an error in natural science, into which even naturalists of the last century, such as Buffon, not unfrequently fell, and which was almost universal among the earlier voyagers and travellers—

It is Mr.
Hugh
Miller

who is in
error: his

multiplication of species is nonsense

the error of confounding as identical the merely allied birds and beasts of distant countries, and of thus assigning to *species* wide areas in creation which in reality they do not occupy." Hugh Miller then goes on to say, "The grouse, for instance, is a widely spread genus, or rather *family*; for it consists of more genera than one. It is so extensively present over the northern hemisphere, that Siberia, Norway, Iceland, and North America, have all their grouse—the latter continent, indeed, from five to eight different kinds; and yet so restricted are some of the species of which they consist, that, were the British Islands to be submerged, one of the best known of the family—the red grouse, or moor fowl (*Lagopus Scoticus*)—would disappear from creation." He then goes on to say, that "this bird is exclusively a British bird; and unless by miracle a new migratory instinct were given to it, a complete submersion of the British Islands would secure its destruction. If the submergence amounted to but a few hundred miles in lateral extent, the moor-fowl would, to a certainty, not seek the distant uninundated land. Hugh Miller instances also the capercaillie, or great cock of the woods, once a native of Scotland, which was exterminated about the time of the last Rebellion, or not long after; the last specimen seen among the pine forests of Strathspey was killed, it is said, in the year 1745; and the last specimen seen among the woods of Strathglass survived till the year 1760, but that since then "the species disappeared from the British Islands; and, though it continued to exist in Norway, did not replenish the tracts from which it had been extirpated. The late Marquis of Breadalbane was at no small cost and trouble in re-introducing the species, and to some extent he succeeded; but the capercaillie is, I understand, still restricted to the Breadalbane woods."

"The dove," says Hugh Miller, "is a *family*, not a *species*. All the American species of doves, for example, differ from the six European species, three of which are to be found in Scotland. Of even the American passenger pigeons (*Ectopistes migratoria*) * * only a single straggler—the one whose chance visit has been recorded by Dr. Fleming—seems to have been ever seen in Britain. And the East has also its own peculiar species, unknown to Europe." As regards the raven, Hugh Miller remarks: "The common raven is more widely spread than any single species of pigeon. Even the raven, however, seems restricted to the northern hemisphere. India and Southern Africa have both their ravens; but the species differ from each other, and from the widely spread northern one." He then goes on to say: "Further, when extirpated in a district it is found that, as in the case of the capercaillie and

the golden eagle, the neighbouring regions in which the raven continues to exist fail for ages to furnish a fresh supply. There are counties in England in which the raven is now never seen." (pp. 307-310.) From these remarks of the distinguished geologist it will be seen that in order to preserve the native birds of the region submerged by the flood, it was necessary to take them into the ark, and is, therefore, no argument against the partial deluge theory.

The size of the ark being altogether inadequate to contain anything like all the existing species of animals distributed over the globe, is in itself a conclusive argument against the universality of the flood. The world renowned voyager, Sir Walter Raleigh, observes in his magnificent History of the World: "If, in a ship of such greatness, we seek room for eighty-nine distinct species of beasts, or, lest any should be omitted, for a hundred several kinds, we shall easily find place both for them and for the birds, which in bigness are no way answerable to them, and for meat to sustain them all. For there are three sorts of beasts whose bodies are of a quality well known; the beef, the sheep, and the wolf; to which the rest may be reduced by saying, according to Aristotle, that one elephant is equal to four beeves, one lion to two wolves, and so of the rest. Of beasts, some feed on vegetables, others on flesh. There are one-and-thirty kinds of the greater sort feeding on vegetables, of which number only three are clean, according to the law of Moses, whereof seven of a kind entered into the ark, namely, three couples for breed, and one odd one for sacrifice; the other twenty-eight kinds were taken by two of each kind; so that in all there were in the ark one-and-twenty great beasts clean, and six-and-fifty unclean; estimable for largeness as ninety-one beeves; yet, for a supplement (lest, perhaps, any species be omitted), let them be valued as a hundred and twenty beeves. Of the lesser sort feeding on vegetables were in the ark six-and-twenty kinds, estimable, with good allowance for supply, as four-score sheep. Of those which devour flesh were two-and-thirty kinds, answerable to threescore and four wolves. All these two hundred and eighty beasts might be kept in one story or room of the ark, in their several cabins; their meat in a second; the birds and their provision in a third, with space to spare for Noah and his family, and all their necessities." "Such," says Hugh Miller, "was the calculation of the great voyager Raleigh—a man who had more practical acquaintance with *stowage* than perhaps any of the other writers who have speculated on the capabilities of the ark; and his estimate seems sober and judicious. It will be seen, however, that from the vast increase in our knowledge of the mammals which has taken place since the age in which the "History of

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the World" was written, the calculation which embraced all the eighty-nine known animals of that time would embrace those of but a single centre of creation now; and that the estimate of Sir Walter tells, in consequence on the side, not of a universal, but of a partial deluge. (Test. of the Rocks, p. 337.)

Sir Walter Raleigh's "History of the World," was written during his imprisonment from 1603 to 1615. A little more than a century afterwards the great French naturalist, Buffon, wrote his famous work "Histoire Naturelle Générale et Particulière," in which he states that "the number of quadruped animals whose existence is certain and well established, does not amount to more than two hundred on the surface of the known world." In this statement of Buffon, Raleigh's allowance for the unknown animals is doubled. Since the time of Buffon by new discoveries the numbers have immensely increased, so "that the eighty-nine distinct species known to Raleigh, have been represented during the last thirty years by the one thousand mammals of Swainson's estimate, the one thousand one hundred and forty-nine mammals of Charles Bonaparte's estimate; the one thousand two hundred and thirty mammals of Winding's estimate, and the one thousand five hundred mammals of Oken's estimate. In the first edition of the admirable "Physical Atlas" of Johnston (published in 1848), there are one thousand six hundred and twenty-six different species of mammals enumerated; and in the second edition (published in 1856) one thousand six hundred and fifty-eight species. And to this very extraordinary advance on the eighty-nine mammals of Raleigh, and the two hundred mammals of Buffon, we must add the six thousand two hundred and sixty-six birds of Lesson, and six hundred and fifty-seven reptiles of Charles Bonaparte; or at least—subtracting the sea snakes, and perhaps the turtles, as fitted to live outside the ark—his six hundred and forty-two reptiles. * * Such is the nature and amount of the increase which has taken place during the last half century in the mammaliferous fauna. In so great a majority of cases has it increased its *bulk* in the ratio in which it has increased its numbers, that if one ark was not deemed more than sufficient to accommodate the animal world known to the French naturalist of eighty years ago, it would require at least from five to six arks to accommodate the animal world known in the present day." (Test. of the Rocks, pp. 338, 342.)

But, besides the inadequate size of the ark to furnish room for all the progenitors of our existing species of animals, there is yet another circumstance which argues with still greater force, if possible, against the theory of universal deluge, namely, the manner in which the animals are now found to be distributed over the face of the earth. Linnaeus, one of the greatest of

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Le loup, le chacal et le chien
sont une seule espèce, avec des
certaines de races, de familles et de variétés

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naturalists, indeed held in the last century, "that all creatures which now inhabit the globe had proceeded originally from some such common centre as the ark might have furnished;" but Hugh Miller says: "No zoologist acquainted with the distribution of species, can acquiesce in any such conclusion now." And then goes on to remark, "We now know that every great continent has its own peculiar fauna; that the original centres of distribution must have been, not one, but many; further, that the areas or circles around these centres must have been occupied by their pristine animals in ages long anterior to that of the Noachian Deluge; nay, that in even the latter geologic ages, they were preceded in them by animals of the same general type. There are fourteen such areas or provinces enumerated by the later naturalists. It may be well, however, instead of running any risk of losing ourselves amid the less nicely defined provinces of the Old World, to draw our illustrations from two-and-a-half provinces of later discovery, whose limits have been rigidly fixed by nature. "The great continents," says Cuvier, "contain species peculiar to each; insomuch that whenever large countries of this description have been discovered, which their situation had kept isolated from the rest of the world, the class of quadrupeds which they contained has been found extremely different from any that had existed elsewhere. Thus, when the Spaniards first penetrated into South America, they did not find a single species of quadruped the same as any of Europe, Asia, or Africa. The puma, the jaguar, the tapir, the cabiai, the lama, the vicuna, the sloths, the armidilloes, the opossums, and the whole tribe of sapajaws, were to them entirely new animals, of which they had no idea. Similar circumstances have occurred in our own time, when the coasts of New Holland and the adjacent islands were first explored. The various species of kangaroo, phascalomys, dasyurus, and perameles, the flying phalangiers, have astonished naturalists by the strangeness of their conformations, which presented proportions contrary to all former rules, and were incapable of being arranged under any of the systems then in use. New Zealand, though singularly devoid of indigenous mammals and reptiles,—for the only native mammal seems to be a peculiar species of rat, and the only native reptile a small harmless lizard,—has a scarce less remarkable fauna than either of these great continents. It consists almost exclusively of birds, some of them so ill-provided with wings, that, like the *wika* of the natives, they can only run along the ground." (pp. 344, 345.)

The eminent scholar, Dr. Pye Smith, who strenuously maintains the hypothesis of a partial deluge, in dealing with this subject emphatically, remarks, "all land animals, having their geographical regions, to which their constitutional natures are

congenial,—many of them being unable to live in any other situation,—we cannot represent to ourselves the idea of their being brought into one small spot from the polar regions, the torrid zone, and all the other climates of Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, Australia, and the thousands of islands,—their preservation and provision, and the final disposal of them,—without bringing up the idea of miracles more stupendous than any that are recorded in Scripture." Another great objection is urged against the *universality of the deluge*, and that is, the quantity of water requisite to cover the whole earth to the height of fifteen cubits, or twenty-two feet above the mountains. It is admitted, even by those who uphold the *universality of the deluge*, that this is the greatest objection, and, indeed, sceptic and rationalistic writers all point to it as a proof of the incredibility of the Mosaic narrative. There are other arguments brought forward against the theory of the deluge having been universal, but sufficient has been said to show, that in the first place, the TEXT according, to the ancient prevailing mode of expression in the East, and especially among the Hebrews, admits of being interpreted that the deluge was merely *partial*. And secondly, that the difficulties connected with the *universal deluge* theory altogether disappear with the theory of a *partial flood*. Vossius says: "The *universality of the deluge*, is impossible and unnecessary; was it not sufficient to deluge those countries where there were men?" It is important to observe, that the theory of a *partial deluge*, was brought forward long before the science of Geology had made its wonderful discoveries, and it can therefore not be said to have been adopted in order to escape the consequences of those discoveries. Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, a very eminent scholar, I believe was the first who suggested the theory of a *partial deluge* in his "*Origines Sacrae*, or Rational Account of the Christian Faith," published about 1660, a work which was received with great favour, and gained for him a great reputation. He held that the deluge was indeed *universal* as regarded man, but only *partial* in reference to the extent of the earth's surface that it covered. (See pp. 236-346.) This theory was adopted by Matthew Poole, a well known commentator; by Le Clerk, by Dr. Pye Smith, in his "Scripture and Geology," (pp. 72-119); by Archdeacon Pratt, in his work entitled "Scripture and Science not at Variance," (pp. 52-56); by Hamilton (who was President of the Geological Society in 1856), in his work "Researches in Asia Minor," &c, (vol. i., p. 202, and vol. ii., p. 386); by Professor Hitchcock, in his work "Religion of Geology," (pp. 103-129); by Kitto, in his "Popular Cycl. of Bib. Lit., new edition, article Deluge"; and by a host of other eminent writers.

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Sceptic and Rationalistic writers insist upon the text speaking of a *universal deluge*, and then bring forward arguments to show the impossibility of such a flood having taken place, thus calling in question the truthfulness of the Mosaic narrative. I prefer to give a few quotations from English writers, to show that *rationalism* flourishes on English soil as luxuriantly as on German. Bishop Colenso, in part ii p. xix., Remarks on the Scripture Account of the Deluge: "Without any appeal to science at all, if only (a person) allows himself to "think" upon the subject, and to realize to his own mind the necessary conditions of the supposed event, he will need only a common practical judgment to convince him that the story told in the book of Genesis is utterly incredible." This is as strong language as is used by any German neologist, either lay or clerical. Dr. Kalisch, another English writer, says: "The question then stands thus: Geology teaches the impossibility of a universal deluge since the last 6,000 years, but does not exclude a partial destruction of the earth's surface within that period. The Biblical text, on the other hand, demands the supposition of a universal deluge, and absolutely excludes a partial flood." (Com. on. Genes. p. 210.) As I have above stated this is precisely what all skeptic and rationalistic writers persist in, and I have therefore in my remarks dwelt upon this point, to show that the Scripture language is nothing more than what is commonly made use of throughout the East even to the present day. Of course, if the sacred text did not admit of the *partial deluge* theory, all that could otherwise be said in its favour would be of no avail.

But the reader will naturally ask, how do these writers account for Moses making such extravagant statements as they say? We will let Dr. Kalisch answer the question, which is substantially the same as would be given by any of the writers belonging to the *new school of criticism*: "The Old Testament," says Dr. Kalisch, "does not show the ancient Hebrews as superior to their contemporaries in secular knowledge. They were not above them in physical sciences: they shared, in positive learning, nearly all their notions, and a great portion of their errors; but they surpassed them, infinitely in religious contemplation; they alone shook off the fetters of superstitions; they conquered idolatry, and rose to the purest notions concerning the attributes of God and the duties of man. The religious lessons, therefore, which the history of the Noachian deluge discloses, are its chief value, and form its only remarkable difference from the many similar traditions of ancient tribes, and they are by no means affected by the question, whether the deluge was partial

pp. 210, 211.) Now, it may well be asked, upon what authority Dr. Kalisch presented these positive statements to his readers? The Mosaic account of the great catastrophe is the earliest account in existence; and it is, therefore, mere conjecture on the part of Dr. Kalisch to say that the sacred writer based his narrative upon an existing tradition, and embellished it to suit his purpose.

Is it surprising that infidelity is on the increase, both in Europe and in this continent, when Biblical critics strip the sacred narratives of the Old Testament of their inspiration, and reduce them to mere ordinary traditions? And strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless only too true, that such rationalistic works find by far a greater number of readers, than works written in the defence of the Scriptures. The universal traditions concerning the deluge throughout the world, among the savage tribes as well as the civilized nations, however, bear incontestible testimony to the verity of the Mosaic narrative. These traditions, indeed, vary in detail, but this naturally arises from their being invariably embodied in their religious systems, and were thus made to assume a form as suited their respective beliefs. They agree, however, in the most essential points with the Mosaic narrative.

As might reasonably be expected, the traditions among the oldest nations, and who lived nearer to the locality where the catastrophe took place, would be more full in detail and less disfigured than those of the modern nations, and living a great distance from the country where the event happened. Hence, we find that the Chaldean tradition bears the closest resemblance of all others to the Biblical narrative. It is as follows: Xisuthrus, the son of Otiartes or Ardates, the representative of the tenth generation after the first man, was a wise and pious monarch. Belus (the Baal of Scripture) revealed to him that constant rain commencing on the fifteenth day of the month Dæsius, would cause a deluge by which all mankind would be exterminated. Belus commanded Xisuthrus to build a large ship, 3,000 feet in length, and 1,200 in breadth, to enter it with his family, and to take with him, of every species of quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles, and of all kinds of provisions required. The king did as he was commanded, and when the rain commenced and the waters increased, he sailed towards Armenia. After the rain had ceased, he sent out some birds in order to find out the condition of the earth. They returned twice, having the second time some mud on their feet. On sending them out the third time, they did not return again. When the ship grounded on one of the Armenian mountains, Xisuthrus left the ship with his wife, his daughter, and the pilot. They erected an altar and offered sacrifices to the gods,

but were soon afterwards raised to heaven, on account of their great piety. Those who had remained in the ship, now left it also, and settled again in Babylon, and became the ancestors of a new human population.

It was believed that the ship was preserved in the highland of Armenia, in the mountain of the Cordymæans, and in later times, pieces of wood, said to have been taken from the ship, were sold, and frequently used as charms. This tradition is preserved in a Fragment of Berosus, a priest and historian of Babylon.

The Persian tradition is: "The world having become exceedingly corrupted by Ahriman, the malignant and destroying spirit, it was necessary to bring over it a flood of water that all impurity might be washed away. The rain came down in drops as large as the head of a bull; the earth was under water to the height of a man, and the creatures of Ahriman were destroyed."

The Indian tradition appears in different forms, but one of them agrees remarkably with the Mosaic narrative. It is as follows: Satyavrata was the seventh king of the Hindoos, who reigned in Dravira, a country washed by the waves of the sea. During his reign, an evil demon by stealth appropriated to himself the sacred books which the first *Manu had received from †Brahma; and the consequence was, that the whole human race, with the exception of the seven saints and the pious King Satyavrata became fearfully corrupted. Then there appeared to the king the divine spirit Vishnu, in the shape of a fish, and declared to him that "In seven days, all the creatures which have sinned against me, shall be destroyed by a deluge; but that he should be saved in a large vessel miraculously constructed." He was commanded to take all kinds of useful herbs, and esculent grain for food, and one pair of each animal. He was also to take with him the seven holy men with their wives. "Go into the ark without fear," said Vishnu to him, "thou shalt see god face to face, and all thy questions shall be answered." After seven days, incessant torrents of rain descended, and the ocean sent forth its waves beyond its shores. Satyavrata, at the sight of this, began to tremble with fear, yet he piously trusted in the promises of Vishnu, and meditating on his attributes saw a large ship floating to the shore, which he entered with the saints, after having executed all that the god had commanded him.

* *Manu*, i.e., the thinking being, from the Sanskrit *man*, to think, is mentioned in the Vedas (holy books) as the progenitor of the human race, and author of the most renowned law books.

† *Brahma*, a Hindoo deity, regarded as the creator of the universe.

Vishnu now appeared himself in the shape of a large horned fish, and fastened the ship with a great sea serpent, as with a cable, to his huge horn. He thus guided it for many years, and at last landed it, on the highest peak of Mount Himavan. The flood ceased; and Vishnu slew the demon, and recovered the sacred books. He instructed the king in all heavenly sciences, and appointed him the seventh Manu under the name Vaivaswata. From this Manu the second population of the earth descended, and hence man is called *manudsha*, i.e., born of Manu, hence, the German words *Mann*, and *Mensch*; and our word *man*.

The account of the flood contained in the Koran is mainly drawn from the Biblical narrative.

In the Greek tradition of the deluge, we observe also a marked resemblance to the Mosaic narrative. The whole human race had become greatly corrupted; rapine and murder prevailed, the sacredness of hospitality was violated, the gods mocked and insulted. Jupiter, therefore, resolved to exterminate the whole human race. The earth opened all its secret springs, the ocean sent forth its floods, and the rain came down from the skies in torrents, and all creatures perished except Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha, who were distinguished for great piety. The two were saved in a large boat which Deucalion had constructed by the advice of his father Prometheus. It was carried to the lofty peaks of Parnassus, which alone reached above the waters of the deluge. After the waters had subsided the surviving pair offered sacrifices to Jupiter, and through this pair the earth was again repopled. According to Plutarch, Deucalion had sent a dove from his ark in order to see whether the waters had subsided. (Plutarch De Solert. Animal sec. 13.) And Lucian mentions that Deucalion built a large chest, and brought into it his wives and children, and that bears, lions, serpents, and all other animals came to him in pairs. (De Dea. Syria. xii., xiii.)

The Chinese tradition bears also in many respects, a great resemblance to the Biblical narrative. The Jesuit Martinus, says, that the Chinese computed the deluge to have taken place 4,000 years before the Christian era. Fa-he, the reputed author of Chinese civilization, is said to have escaped from the waters of the deluge. He re-appears as the first man at the production of a renovated world, attended by seven companions, his wife, his three sons, and three daughters, by whose intermarriage the whole circle of the universe is finally completed.

In Mexico the traditions of the deluge are preserved in pictorial paintings. Baron von Humboldt observes: "Of the different nations that inhabit Mexico, the following have paintings representing the Deluge of Coxcox, viz., the Aztecs, the

Mitztecs, the Zapotecs, the Tlascaltecs, and the Mechoacanese. The Noah, Xisuthrus, or Menou of those nations, is termed Coxcox, Teo-Cipactli or Tezpi. He saved himself with his wife, Xochiquetzal in a bark, or according to other traditions, on a raft. The painting represents Coxcox in the midst of the water lying in a bark. The mountain, the summit of which rises above the waters, is the Peak of Colhuacan; the Ararat of the Mexicans. At the foot of the mountain appear the heads of Coxcox and his wife. The latter is known by the two tresses in the form of horns, denoting the female sex. The men born after the deluge were dumb; a dove from the top of a tree distributes among them tongues, represented under the form of small comas. Speaking of the Mechoacan tradition he says, "that Coxcox, whom they called Tezpi, embarked in a spacious *acalli* with his wife, his children, several animals, and grain. When the great spirit ordered the waters to withdraw, Tezpi sent out from his bark a vulture, the *zopilote* (*vultur aura*.) This bird, which feeds on dead flesh, did not return on account of the carcasses with which the earth was strewed. Tezpi sent out other birds, one of which, the humming-bird, alone, returned, holding in its beak a branch covered with leaves. Tezpi, seeing that fresh verdure began to clothe the soil, quitted his bark near the mountain of Colhuacan. (Humboldt's Researches, vol. ii. p. 64, Eng Edit.)

The inhabitants of the Fiji islands have also a tradition about a flood which had taken place at one time. They say that "after the islands had been peopled by the first man and woman, a great rain took place by which they were altogether submerged; but before the highest places were covered by the waters two large double canoes made their appearance. In one of these was Rokora, the god of carpenters; in the other Rokola, his head workman, who picked up some of the people, and kept them on board until the waters had subsided, after which they were again landed on the island. It is reported that in former times canoes were always kept in readiness against another inundation. The persons thus saved, eight in number, were landed at Mbenga, where the highest of their gods is said to have made his first appearance. By virtue of this tradition, the chiefs of Mbenga, take rank above all others, and have always acted a conspicuous part among the Fijis. They style themselves Ngali-duva-ki-langi, i. e., subject to heaven alone." (Wilkes' Exploring Expedition.)

Aringhi in his "Roma subterranea," gives a description of four marble sarcophagi on which is represented the ark in the form of a square chest, floating upon a stream of water. In it is seen the figure of the patriarch from the waist upwards; and above, the dove bearing the olive branch towards him. A

similar representation is given in a painting in the cemetery of Callistus. (Tom. i., pp. 325 331, 333; Tom. ii., p. 143. See also Cardinal Wiseman's Lectures, "Connexion Between Science and Revealed Religion," vol. ii. p. 123.

The imperial bronze medals of the city of Apamea, in Phrygia, bear on one side the head of different emperors, of Severus, Macrinus, and Philip the elder. But the reverse is uniform, and is described by Eckhel as follows: "A chest swimming upon the waters, in which a man and a woman appear from the breast upwards. On the lid of the chest stands a bird, and another, balanced in the air, holds in its claws an olive branch. On the outside of the chest, apparently in the act of leaving it, are a woman robed, and a man in a short garment, with their faces turned from it, and holding up their right hands." We have here represented two different scenes, but evidently the same actors. For the costume and heads of the persons standing outside do not allow us to consider them others than the figures in the ark. We have these individuals first floating over the waters in an ark, then standing on the dry land in an attitude of admiration. (*Doctrina Numorum Veterum*, Vienna, 1793, part i., vol iii., pp. 130, 136. See also Cardinal Wiseman's Lectures, vol. ii., pp. 118, 119.) But the most interesting circumstance connected with these medals requires yet to be mentioned. On the front panel of the chest or ark are the letters $N\Omega$, NO , or $N\Omega E$, NOE , very probably the letter E , E , on those medals on which only the two letters occur has become effaced. Eckhel, who is considered one of the best authorities on this subject, concludes, that inasmuch as the entire scene represented on these medals undoubtedly bears reference to the Noachian deluge, so must also the inscription on the ark; and consequently must be the name of the patriarch Noah.

It may, however be asked, what induced the Apameans to choose the deluge as a symbol on their coins? To this we may reply, that it was apparently customary for cities to choose as their emblems any remarkable event which was supposed to have taken place there. Now it appears there existed a popular tradition that Mount Ararat, upon which the ark rested, stood in the neighbourhood of Apamea, or Celæna, as it was anciently called. And this will likewise account for the city having formerly been called *Kibotos*, i.e., *the ark*; the very word which is employed in the Septuagint, and by Josephus in speaking of Noah's ark.

It will thus be seen that the heathen traditions of a deluge throughout the world, coincide in the most important particulars with the Scriptural account of that catastrophe. All agree that it was on account of the great wickedness of the human race that the flood was sent; that only one man was saved

with his family, and that by this family the earth was again repopled; that birds were sent out, in order to ascertain the condition of the earth; and that an altar was built and sacrifices offered. The traditions may indeed be more or less intermingled with fables, yet the leading facts are there, and it is utterly incredible that so many nations widely separated from each other, differing in their religious systems, manners, and customs, should agree in attesting to these circumstances if no such circumstances had ever occurred. And it cannot be said that this tradition of the flood obtained its universality through the medium of Christian missionaries, for it existed already among ancient nations who flourished long before the promulgation of Christianity, and is found to exist among savage tribes who have never been visited by missionaries. The Scriptural statement contained in ch. x. 32, that from the three sons of Noah the earth was repopled after the flood, alone satisfactorily accounts for the universality of the tradition, and all that sceptics and rationalists may write or say, the fact still remains the same.

21. *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; and every man.*

22. *All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was on the dry land, died.*

The phrase נשמת רוח חיים (*nishmath ruach chaiyim*) is in the Authorized Version rendered "the breath of life," following the Greek Version, but the rendering above given, and which is also given in the Revised Version, is the correct rendering. The expression "in whose nostrils is the breath of the spirit of life," evidently is only explanatory, "of every man," at the end of verse 21; for the destruction of the animals had already been described in the former part of the verse. The sacred writer, having stated that all inferior animals had perished, then goes on to say, "and every man; every one in whose nostrils is the breath of the spirit of life;" and in order to make the declaration more emphatic, he adds, "of all that was on the dry land died." In the original, we may remark also, the phrase, "and every man," at the end of verse 21, is separated from what precedes by one of the two chief *pause accents* in the language, which shows that this phrase forms an independent sentence. In the English Version it is punctuated by a *comma*, instead of a *colon* or *semi-colon*, which are the proper equivalent to the Hebrew accent. We must not omit to state, that the phrase נשמת רוח חיים (*nishmath ruach chaiyim*) "the breath of the spirit of life," does not occur again in the

Old Testament ; it is the same expression as is used in ch. ii. 7, "and he breathed in his nostrils נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים (*nishmath chiyim*) the breath of life," with the exception that in the passage under consideration the word רוּחַ (*ruach*) "spirit" is added apparently for emphasis sake. Or the phrase may be an abbreviated expression of נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים רוּחַ (*nishmath chiyim ruach*) spirit of life, and רוּחַ חַיִּים (*ruach chiyim*) breath of life, the two being combined in order to give additional force to the declaration.

23. *And He blotted out every living being that was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and reptiles, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained, and those that were with him in the ark.*

'And He blotted out,' that is, God blotted out according as He had declared in verse 4. The form of the verb וַיִּמַּח (*waiymach*) is active (the *Kal* of מָחָה (*machah*), and therefore must be rendered as we have done above, and the same rendering is also given in the Revised Version in the margin. Some modern editions of the Bible, however, have the reading וַיִּמָּח (*waiyimmach*) the passive (the *Niphal*) "And it was blotted out," which reading was followed by the translators of the Authorized Version. But all the old versions have the active form, and most eminent critics and interpreters have adopted that reading.*

*The construction with the following particle אֵת (*eth*) favours also the active form. In comparatively few instances it is true, we find this particle also employed with a passive verb to point out more particularly the subject of it; in that case it assumes the force of *to wit* or *namely*, and our passage would accordingly have to be rendered, "And it was blotted out, to wit, every living thing." The Hebrew student will find similar construction in Gen. iv. 18; xvii. 5; xxvii. 42; Exod. x. 8; xxi. 28; xxv. 28; Numb. xxxii. 5; Deut. xii. 22; 1 Kings ii. 21.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. *And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth; and the waters subsided.*

The last verse of the preceding chapter informs us that "the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days," and in the opening verse of this chapter we are told that then "God remembered Noah, and every living thing." The expression "God remembered" must not be taken in a literal sense, for God had not for one moment forgotten the inmates of the ark; on the contrary, as soon as they had entered it, the vessel was taken under His special guidance and protection. The meaning is, that God remembered Noah by putting forth another display of His omnipotence in his behalf by causing the waters gradually to subside, so that the inmates of the ark might be released from their confinement. God never forgets the pious and upright. "And God caused a wind to pass over the earth": we have already stated that God always employs natural agencies as long as these are sufficient in affecting a desired end, and it is only when it is beyond the power of natural means, that His almighty power is manifested. In this instance the natural agency employed to assuage the waters was "a wind," but it required supernatural power to *cause* the wind to come just at the time when needed, and to shield the ark from evil effects of the aerial elements. "And the waters subsided or settled down," *i. e.*, they began to subside. The verb שָׁכַח (*shachach*), to *subside*, to *settle down*, is sometimes applied also: to *the appeasing* of anger. (See Esth. ii. 1.)

2. *And the fountains of the deep, and the windows of heaven were closed, and the rain from heaven was restrained.*

A hundred and fifty days after the commencement of the deluge, the sources which so abundantly contributed in bringing about the catastrophe were now again closed. This could not be affected by natural agency. He only who had broken up the fountains of the deep, and opened the windows of heaven could close them again.

3. *And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and at the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters decreased.*

"And the waters returned continually." This rendering affords the meaning of the original, though it is far from being

a literal meaning. By a peculiar Hebrew idiom a continuancy of action is expressed by the use of *two infinitives*, and hence the expression in the original is, "and the waters *הלך ושוב* (*haloch washov*) to go and to return," that is, the waters were gradually yet continually subsiding. (See also verse 7.)

4. *And the ark rested, in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.*

"In the seventh month," namely, the seventh month of the year, not from the beginning of the deluge, which had now lasted five months, or one hundred and fifty days. "Rested," the verb *נח* (*nuach*) here employed, signifies *to settle down quietly*, as one sits down into a chair, showing God's providential care in shielding the vessel from harm. "Upon the mountains of Ararat:" the mountain which now is known to Europeans as the Ararat, and upon which the ark is said to have rested, consists of two separate peaks of unequal height, both of which disappear in the clouds. The highest rises 17,730 feet above the level of the sea, and the lesser 14,573 feet. There is a chasm 12,000 yards wide between the two peaks. The mountain is 12 leagues east of the town of Erivan, situated in a vast plain, and formerly belonged to Persia, but was in 1828 ceded to Russia. Among the Eastern people it is called by different names, as *Bacis*, *Masis*, by the natives; the Turks call it *Aghri-Tagh*, *i.e.*, steep mountain; the Persians *Asis*, *i.e.*, the happy mountain, and also *Kuhi-Nuch*, *i.e.*, the mountain of Noah; in the Koran, it is spoken of as *Dsheuti* in Kurdistan. It is not known when it received the name *Ararat*, which the Armenians write *Arai-arat*, *i.e.*, the ruin of Arai, and say it was so called because Arai, the eighth king of Armenia, is said to have been defeated and killed in one of the plains of this province 1750 B. C. We will hereafter show that *Ararat* occurs in Scripture only as the name of a country, and not of a mountain. Morier speaks of Ararat as being most beautiful in shape and most awful in height. Sir Robert Ker Porter gives the following graphic description of this stupendous work of nature:—"As the vale opened beneath us, in our descent, my whole attention became absorbed in the view before me. A vast plain with countless villages, the towers and spires of the churches of Eitch-maidzen arising from amidst them; the glittering waters of the Araxes flowing through the fresh green of the vale; and the subordinate range of mountains skirting the base of the awful monument of the antediluvian world, it seemed to stand a stupendous link in the history of man, uniting the two races of men, before and after the flood. But it was not until we had

arrived upon the first plain, that I beheld Ararat in all its amplitude of grandeur. From the spot on which I stood, it appeared as if the hugest mountains of the world had been piled upon each other, to form this one sublime immensity of earth, and rock, and snow. The icy peaks of its double heads rose majestically into the clear and cloudless heavens; the sun blazed bright upon them, and the reflections sent forth a zling radiance equal to other suns. This point of the united the utmost grandeur of plain and height, but the feelings I experienced while looking on the mountain are hardly to be described. My eye, not able to rest for any length of time on the blinding glory of its summits, wandered down the apparently interminable sides, till I could no longer trace their vast lines in the midst of the horizon, when an inexpressible impulse immediately carrying my eye upwards again, refixed my gaze on the awful glare of Ararat; and this bewildered sensibility of sight, being answered by a similar feeling in the mind, for some moments I was lost in a strange suspension of the powers of thought."

Sir Robert, in speaking of the two peaks, remarks: "These inaccessible summits have never been trodden by the foot of man, since the days of Noah, if even then, for my opinion the ark rested in the space between the heads, and not on top of either. Various attempts have been made in different ages to ascend these tremendous mountain pyramids but in vain; their form, snows, and glaciers, are insurmountable obstacles, the distance being so great from the commencement of the ivy regions to the highest points; cold, alone, would be the destruction of any person who should have the hardihood to persevere."

The French traveller Tournefort made an attempt to reach the top in the year 1700, but after a long hard struggle with the many difficulties that he encountered, he was at last obliged to give up the attempt. About the beginning of the present century another attempt was made by the Pasha of Bayazeed; but he also, after experiencing many hardships, and narrow escapes of his life, was at last obliged to desist.

Among the Armenians it is almost an article of faith, that the summit of the mountain cannot be reached, and they consequently rejoiced at the different failures. They considered, that the mountain would lose its sanctity if its summit were reached by the curiosity of travellers, for they firmly believe that the ark of Noah, or at least part of it, still exists on the peak.

Notwithstanding the repeated failures, and the hardships, and dangers experienced by previous travellers in their attempt to reach the summit of Ararat, the intrepid German traveller

Dr. Parrot determined to make another attempt, and had the satisfaction of having his laborious and dangerous adventure, after two fruitless attempts, at last crowned with success on the 27th of September, 1829. As we shall have to combat the deeply rooted and widely prevailing belief of the ark having rested after the flood on Mount Ararat, we will here quote Dr. Parrot's own account of his ascent, so that the reader may see how utterly impossible it would have been without a direct miracle for many of the inmates of the ark, as elephants, camels, horses, and other quadrupeds to have descended from the highest peak, when it is even now regarded as a remarkable achievement almost transcending human power.

Prof. Parrot was accompanied by Mr. Behagel as mineralogist, Messrs. Hehn, and Schiemann, medical students of Moscow, and Mr. Federow an astronomer of St. Petersburg. "On the 12th of September, at seven o'clock in the morning," says Dr. Parrot, "I set out on my journey, from the convent of St. James, near the foot of the mountain, accompanied by Mr. Schiemann. We took with us one of our Cossacks and a peasant of Arguri, who was a good huntsman, and our route was first in the bottom of the valley, then up its right acclivity towards the spot where there are two small storehouses standing close to each other; the one formerly a chapel, and the other built as a protection for a spring, which is considered sacred.

From the chapel we crossed the grassy elevation, which forms the right declivity of the cleft. We suffered so much from the heat of the day, that our Cossack, who would probably rather have been seated on horseback and galloping about on the steppes for three days than scrambling over the rocks for a couple of hours, was ready to sink from fatigue, and we were obliged to send him back. At about six o'clock in the evening, when we were also very tired, and had almost reached the snowy region, we chose our night's lodgings in the clefts of the rocks. We had attained the height of 11,675 Paris feet; in the sheltered places about us lay some new fallen snow, and the temperature of the air was at the freezing point. Mr. Schiemann and I had provided ourselves tolerably well for such an undertaking, besides the pleasure of the expedition warmed us; but our athletic Jägar, Schak of Arguri (Isaac), was quite dejected from the cold, for he had nothing but his summer clothing; his whole neck, and also his legs, were quite bare. I had neglected to think about his wardrobe before setting out, and it therefore was my duty to help him as well as I could, but as neither of us had much clothing to spare, I wrapped up his neck and his bare limbs in sheets of blotting paper which I had taken with me for drying plants, and this was a great relief to him. At daybreak we set out again on our journey

towards the eastern side of the mountain, and soon reached the declivity which runs immediately from the summit; it consists entirely of pointed rocky ridges coming down from above, and leaving between them ravines of considerable depth; in which the icy mantle of the summit loses itself, and glaciers of great extent. There were several of these rocky ridges and clefts of ice lying between us and the side of the mountain which we were endeavouring to reach. When we had happily surmounted the first crest and the adjoining beautiful glacier, and reached the second crest, Schak had no courage to proceed. His benumbed limbs had not yet recovered their warmth, and the icy region towards which he saw us hastening, did not hold out much prospect of relief; thus one remained behind from heat, and the other from cold—only Schiemann, though unaccustomed to these hardships, did not for an instant lose his courage or his desire to accompany me, but shared with alacrity and perseverance all the difficulties and dangers we had to encounter. Leaving the Jäger behind us, we crossed the second glacier, and gained the third rocky ridge. Then immediately turning off in an oblique direction, we reached the lower edge of the icy crest, at a height of 13,180 Paris feet, which runs from this place without interruption to the summit. We had now to ascend this declivity covered with perpetual snow. Though the inclination was barely 30 degrees, this was sheer impossibility for two men to accomplish in a direct line. We therefore determined to advance diagonally towards a long pointed ridge which runs far up towards the summit. We succeeded in this by making with our ice-poles deep holes in the ice of the glacier, which was covered with a thin layer of new fallen snow, too slight to afford the requisite firmness to our steps. We thus reached the ridge, and advanced directly towards the summit by a track where the new snow was rather deeper. Though we might by great exertions have this time reached the goal of our wishes, yet the fatigue of the day had been considerable, and as it was already three o'clock in the afternoon, we were obliged to provide a lodging for the night. We had obtained the extreme upper ridge of the rocky crest, an elevation of 14,500 Paris feet above the level of the sea, (the height of mount Blanc,) and yet the summit of Ararat lay far above us. I do not think that any insurmountable obstacle could have impeded our further progress, but to spend the few remaining hours of daylight in reaching this point would have been worse than madness, as we had not seen any rock on the summit which would have afforded us protection during the night, independently of which our stock of provisions was not calculated to last so long. Having made our barometrical observations, we turned back, satisfied from the result that the

mountain from this side was not inaccessible. In descending, however, we met with a danger which we had not anticipated; for if in the descent of every mountain you tread less safely than in going up, it is still more difficult to tread firmly, when you look down upon such a surface of ice and snow as that over which we had to pass for more than a werst, and where, if we slipped and fell, there was nothing to stop us but the sharp-pointed masses of stone in which the region of eternal ice loses itself. The danger here is perhaps rather in the want of habit than in the real difficulties. My young friend, whose courage had probably been proof against severe trials, lost his presence of mind here. His foot slipped, and he fell, but as he was about twenty paces behind me, I had time to thrust my pole firmly in the ice, to take a more sure footing in my capital snow-shoes, and while I held the pole in my right hand, to catch him in passing with my left. My position was well chosen, but the straps which fastened my ice-shoes broke, and, instead of being able to stop my friend, I was carried with him in his fall. He was so fortunate as to be stopped by some stones, but I rolled on for half a werst, till I reached some fragments of lava near the lower glacier. The tube of my barometer was dashed to pieces—my chronometer burst open, and was covered with blood—and every thing had fallen out of my pockets, but I escaped without severe injury. As soon as we had recovered from our fright, and thanked God for our providential escape, we collected the most important of our effects, and continued our journey. We were soon afterwards delighted to hear the voice of our good Schak, who had very prudently waited for our return. Having made a fire, we passed the night in the grassy region, and on the third day reached the convent, where we were regaled with an excellent breakfast. We however took care not to tell the Armenians anything about our accident, as they would certainly not have failed to ascribe it to a judgment from heaven for our presumptuous attempt to reach the summit, which they say has been prohibited to mortals by a divine decree since the time of Noah. All the Armenians are firmly persuaded that Noah's ark exists to the present day on the summit of Mount Ararat, and that in order to preserve it, no person is permitted to approach it."

Dr. Parrot was laid up for a few days with an attack of fever, brought on by the effects of the fall, but on the 18th of September he considered himself sufficiently recovered to make another attempt to reach the summit. This time he took with him a cross ten feet high, which he proposed to set up on the top of the mountain, with an inscription in honour of Field Marshal Count Poskevitch, by whose victories

the Russian dominion had been extended to this point. He chose this time the north-east side of the mountain, by which the way was much longer, but not so steep. In this second attempt he also failed, they erected however the cross on an almost horizontal surface covered with snow, at the height of 15,138 Paris feet above the level of the Euxine, or about 350 feet higher than Mount Blanc.

"On the 25th September," continues Professor Parrot, "I sent to ask Stepan whether he would join us, but he declined, saying that he had suffered too much from the former excursion to venture again so soon; he however promised to send us four stout peasants with their oxen and a driver. Early next morning four stout peasants made their appearance at the camp, and soon after a fifth, who offered himself voluntarily. To them I added four of our soldiers. The deacon again accompanied us, as well as Mr. Hehn, who wished to explore the vegetation at a greater elevation, but he did not intend to proceed beyond the line of snow. The experience of the preceding attempt had convinced me that every thing depended on our passing the first night as closely as possible to this boundary, in order to be able to ascend and return from the summit in one day, and to confine our baggage to what was absolutely necessary. We therefore took with us three oxen laden with the clothing, wood, and provisions. I also took a cross carved in oak * * * We chose our route towards the same side as before, and in order to spare ourselves Abowiam and I rode on horseback. Here Mr. Hehn parted from us. It was scarcely twelve o'clock when we reached this point, and, after partaking of our breakfast, we proceeded in a direction rather more oblique than on our former attempt. The cattle were, however, unable to follow us so quickly. We therefore halted at some rocks which it would be impossible for them to pass—took each our own share of clothing and wood, and sent back the oxen. At half-past five in the evening we were not far from the snow line, and considerably higher than the place where we passed the night on our previous excursion. The elevation at this point is 13,036 Paris feet above the level of the sea; and the large masses of rock determined me to take up our quarters here. A fire was soon made, and a supper prepared. I had some onion broth, a dish which I would recommend to all mountain travellers in preference to most broth, as being extremely warm and invigorating. It was a magnificent evening, and, with my eyes fixed on the clear sky, and the lofty summit which projected against it, and then again on the dark night which was gathering far below, and around me, I experienced all these delightful sensations of tranquility, love, and devotion, that silent reminiscence of the past, that subdued glance into the

future, which a traveller never fails to experience when on lofty elevations, and under pleasing circumstances. I laid myself down under an overhanging rock of lava, the temperature of the air at $4\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, which was tolerably warm, considering our great height. At day-break we rose, and began our journey at half past six. We passed the last broken declivities in half an hour, and entered the boundary of eternal snow nearly at the same place as in our preceding ascent. In consequence of the increased warmth of the weather, the new-fallen snow, which had facilitated our progress in our previous ascent, had melted away, and again frozen, so that, in spite of the considerable slope, we were compelled to cut steps in the ice. This very much embarrassed our advance and added greatly to our fatigue. One of our peasants had remained behind in our resting place, as he felt unwell; two others became exhausted in ascending the side of the glacier. They at first lay down, but soon retreated to our quarters. Without being disheartened by these difficulties we proceeded, and soon reached the great cleft which makes the upper edge of the declivity of the large glacier, and at ten o'clock we arrived at the great plain of snow which makes the first break on the icy head of Ararat. In the direction of, towards the summit, a shorter but at the same time a steeper declivity than the one we had passed lay before us; and between this and the extreme summit there appeared to be only a small hill. After a short repose we passed the first precipice, which was the steepest of all, by hewing out steps in the rock, and after this the next elevation. But here, instead of seeing the ultimate goal of all our difficulties, immediately before us appeared a series of hills, which even concealed the summit from our sight. This rather abated our courage, which had never yielded for a moment so long as we had all our difficulties in view, and our strength, exhausted by the labor of hewing the rock, seemed scarcely commensurate with the attainment of the now invisible object of our wishes. But a review of what had already been accomplished, and of that which might still remain to be done, the proximity of the series of projecting elevations, and a glance at my brave companions banished my fears, and we boldly advanced. We crossed two more hills, and the cold air of the summit blew towards us. I stepped from behind one of the glaciers, and the extreme cone of Ararat lay distinctly before my enraptured eyes. But one more effort was necessary. Only one other icy plain was to be ascended, and at a quarter past three, on the 27th of September, 1829, we stood on the summit of Mount Ararat!"

The above account of the ascent is taken from the *Foreign Quarterly Review* for June, 1835, and the reviewer of Professor

Parrot's book goes on to say: "Having thus happily accomplished his fatiguing and perilous enterprise, our author's first wish and enjoyment was repose; he spread a cloak on the ground, and sitting down, contemplated the boundless but desolate prospect around him. He was on a slight convex, almost circular platform, about 200 Paris feet in diameter, which at the extremity declines pretty steeply on all sides, particularly towards the S. E. and N. E.; it was the silver crest of Ararat, composed of eternal ice, unbroken by a rock or stone. Towards the east, the summit declined more gently than in any other direction, and was connected by a hollow, likewise covered by perpetual ice, with another rather lower summit, which by Mr. Federows trigonometrical measurement was found to be 187 toises distant from the principal summit. On account of the immense distances nothing could be seen distinctly. The whole valley of the Araxes was covered with a grey mist, through which Erivan and Sandarabad appeared as small dark spots. While the Professor was engaged in his observations the deacon, planted the cross, not precisely on the summit, where it could not have been seen from the plain, as it was only five feet high, but on the N. E. edge, about thirty feet lower than the centre of the summit. The Professor and his five companions, viz., the deacon, two Russian soldiers, and two Armenian peasants, having remained three quarters of an hour on the summit, commenced their descent, which was very fatiguing; but they hastened as the sun was going down, and before they reached the place where the great cross was erected, it had already sunk below the horizon. It was a glorious sight to behold the dark shadows which the mountains in the west cast upon the plain, and then the profound darkness which covered all the valleys, and gradually rose higher and higher on the sides of Ararat, whose icy summit was still illuminated by the beams of the setting sun. But the shadows soon passed over that also, and would have covered our path with a gloom that would have rendered our descent dangerous, had not the sacred lamp of night opportunely rising above the eastern horizon, cheered us with its welcome beams.

Having passed the night on the same spot as on their ascent, where they found their companions, they arrived the next day at noon, at the Convent of St. James, and on the following day, Sunday, the 28th September, they offered their grateful thanksgiving to Heaven for the success of their arduous enterprise, perhaps not far from the spot where Noah built an altar to the LORD."

Encouraged by Dr. Parrot's success, frequent attempts were afterwards made by other travellers, but all failed to reach the summit, until five years afterwards, the Russian traveller

Antornomoff, after encountering many dangers, and experiencing much hardship and fatigue, had the gratification to reach the top of the mountain. The pious Armenians, however, still persist in declaring the statements of these travellers as bare-faced impositions. The last account we have of a successful attempt was by five English travellers in 1856, they were greatly disappointed in not finding the ark, or at least a portion of it, and came to the conclusion that it did not land on Mount Ararat at all, but merely floated in its neighbourhood, and that its real resting place will never be discovered by any human being. There is a widely prevailing tradition among the Eastern Churches that a certain monk, James, afterwards patriarch of Nisibis, and a contemporary of St. Gregory, longed to see the sacred ark with his own eyes, and made an attempt to ascend, but frequently fell asleep from exhaustion; and when he awoke always found that he had slipped back to the place from whence he had started. At last he was informed in a dream, that no human being will ever succeed in reaching the summit, but as a reward God sent him down a piece of the ark, which to the present day is preserved as a most precious relic, in the cathedral of Etchmiadzen.

The reader will now see, how utterly impossible it would have been without a special miracle for some of the quadrupeds to have made a descent over the icy declivities and rocky precipices. Nay, even for the human inmates, when it proves such a dangerous and difficult undertaking to modern travellers provided as they are, with all the aid that human ingenuity has devised.

But it is altogether unwarrantable on the part of some of our modern critics to bring forward the statement that *the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat*, as a proof of the unhistorical character of the book of Genesis, for it is not Scripture, but a tradition founded upon an erroneous interpretation of the original, that represents the ark to have rested on the mountain now known to Europeans as Ararat. To this point I will now call the reader's attention.

I have already hinted that the term "Ararat" occurs nowhere in Scripture as the name of *a mountain*, but as the name of *a region or country*. This will at once become evident when we turn to the only three places in which the term is found. Thus in 2 Kings xix. 37, it is spoken of as the country into which the two sons of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, fled, after having killed their father in the house of Nisroch his god; "and they escaped into ארץ אררט (*erets Ararat*) the land of Ararat." In the Authorized Version it is rendered "into the land of Armenia," but in the Revised Version it is correctly rendered "the land of Ararat." This passage clearly shows that "the

land of Ararat" was not far from the Tigris and Euphrates, but did not form a part of the Assyrian empire. The second place where the term occurs is, Is. xxxii. 38, where the prophet quotes the circumstance of the murder of Sennacherib by his two sons verbatim.* And the third place where the term occurs is in Jer. li. 27, where "Ararat" is mentioned in connection with the kingdoms of "Minni" and "Ashchenaz;"—"call together against her (Babylon) the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz." In the Authorized Version "Ararat" is retained and not translated Armenia, like in the other two places. It is quite clear from these passages that Ararat is the name of a country and not of a mountain, and a mere glance at the phraseology will show that the same is the case also in the passage under consideration. Whenever the sacred writers speak of a particular mountain, they invariably use the singular, as for example, הר סיני (*har Sinai*) Mount Sinai, הר לבנון (*har Lebanon*) Mount Lebanon; but in our passage we have "הרי אררט" (*hare Ararat*) "mountains of Ararat," the noun in the plural and in the construct state (genitive), which conclusively shows that Ararat cannot be the name of a mountain, for it would be as great a violation of correct language in Hebrew to say "the mountains of Ararat," as it would be in English to say, *the mountains of the Alps*. All the ancient authorities agree in taking "Ararat" as the name of a country, thus Berossus the Chaldean historian contemporary with Alexander the Great, places the descent of the ark "on the mountains of Kurdistan." He observes, "It is said there is still some part of the ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyæans; and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they use chiefly as amulets for the averting of mischiefs." (Joseph. Ant. B. I. ch. iii. par. 6).

Josephus also remarks, "After this, the ark rested on a certain mountain in Armenia." (Ant. B. I. ch. iii. par. 5.) The opinion of Berossus is followed by the Chaldee and Syriac Versions, which give טורי קרדו (*ture Kardu*) "the mountains of Kurdistan." In the valgate also, it is rendered "super montes Armeniae." "Ararat," as the name of a mountain, was unknown to the geographers of Greece and Rome, and even the Armenians to this day, call the mountain known to us as Ararat, *Masis*.

Jerome understood by the expression "mountains of Ararat," the plain of the Araxes, but most modern critics consider the expression in its Biblical sense, as descriptive generally of the *Armenian highlands*, the lofty plateau, which overlooks the plain of the Araxes. And here, we again perceive the wisdom

* The murder of Sennacherib is also mentioned in the Apocryphal book Tobit i. 21, where the sons are said to have fled "into the mountains of Ararat."

of Divine Providence in guiding the ark to this locality. The vegetation best suited to pastoral life is here abundant, and, therefore, well adapted for the nomade state, in which the early generations of Noah's descendants naturally have lived. On the other hand, the climate is very severe, the winter lasts from October to May, and is followed by a very short spring, and an intensely hot summer. The severity of the climate, would therefore afford a powerful inducement for the inhabitants as they increased to seek for more temperate regions, and thus bring about a more rapid dispersion of the people than if the ark had rested in a more pleasant locality.

The celebrated French traveller Tavernier, says, that the city Nackshivan, three leagues from mount Ararat, is the most ancient city in the world; that the name is compounded of Nack, *a ship*, and schivan, *settled* or *stopped*, and that it received this name, in memory of Noah having settled there after leaving the ark.

5. *And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.*

The waters were continually abating, or as the original has it הָלַךְ וְחָסַר (*haloch wechasor*), *to go and to diminish*, until the first day of the tenth month, when they had sufficiently decreased to render the tops of the mountains in general visible. In the Authorized Version, and also in the Revised Version, the Hebrew verb נִרְאָה (*nirua*), is rendered "were seen," but there is nothing in the narrative to indicate that the inmates of the ark saw the tops, and there was nobody else to see them. The meaning of the verb here, no doubt is, that at the time stated the tops of the mountain "became visible," or "appeared"; though the rendering of the Authorized Version is also quite admissible.

6. *And it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:*

7. *And he sent out the raven; and it went to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth.*

"At the end of forty days," that is, reckoning from "the first day of the tenth month." "And he sent forth the raven." Noah was evidently acquainted with the habits of the bird, and therefore selected it as the most fitted for the occasion. The raven is a strong, hardy, active bird, a greedy plunderer, and feeds chiefly on carion. It can endure heat, cold, and hunger, and was therefore a suitable messenger in order to ascertain the condition of the earth. "And it went to and fro," that is,

it kept flying away and returning again to the ark without however being taken into it. The tops of the mountain afforded a resting place, and carion supplied food. In Hebrew the raven is called *orev* (עֹרֵב), *black bird*.

8. *And he sent forth the dove from him, to see whether the waters had abated from the face of the ground.*

The mere flying to and fro of the raven, furnished very little information as to the state of the waters upon the face of the earth. After seven days Noah, therefore, made another trial, this time selecting the dove as his messenger, being more delicate and tenderly attached to its mate, and consequently more likely to return. Our verse does not state what time elapsed between the sending of the raven, and the sending of the dove, but it was evidently seven days, for in verse 10 we read, "And he waited yet other seven days."

9. *But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned to him, into the ark; for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: and he stretched out his hand, and took her, and brought her to himself into the ark.*

The mountain tops had indeed become bare, but doves do not delight in frequenting mountains, and are probably on that account by the prophet Ezekiel called **"doves of the valleys."* (Ch. vii. 16.) They delight in dry, clean places, and never alight on carion. The dove, therefore, not finding a resting place for the sole of her feet, guided by instinct she returned again to the ark. In Palestine there are two species of doves, the house dove and the field dove.

* "And if their escaped ones escape, they shall be upon the mountains like doves of the valleys, all mourning, every one for his iniquity." That is, if those who attempt to escape from the fury of battle are successful in their efforts, they will in their solitary place of refuge in melancholy tones bewail their iniquity. The escape of the fugitives is here compared to doves of the valleys which alarmed by a bird of prey or a bird catcher, quickly forsake their natural abode in the cliffs, and seek refuge in the mountains. And the moaning of the escaped is very aptly compared to the melancholy cooing of the doves. The mountains are in other places in Scripture spoken of as a place of refuge both for men and birds.

"Thus David says :

"In the Lord I put my trust :
How say ye to my soul,
Flee as a bird to your mountain?" (Ps. xi. 1.)

"The Hebrews evidently regarded the cooing of the dove as a doleful cry, thus Hezekiah says :

"Like a swallow or a crane, so did I chatter :
I did mourn as a dove : mine eyes fail *with looking upwards*,"
(Is. xxxviii. 14.)

10. *And he waited yet other seven days, and again sent forth the dove out of the ark.*

11. *And the dove came in to him at eventide; and behold, in her mouth was an olive leaf freshly plucked; and Noah knew that the waters had abated from off the earth.*

The dove this time only returned when darkness began to spread gloom over the still immersed earth, bearing a freshly plucked olive leaf in her mouth; this was a cheering proof to Noah, that the tops of the trees had now emerged from their watery covering. The ancient geographer Strabo testifies that the olive tree was common in Armenia; and the Greek naturalist Theophrastus states that the olive tree retains its verdure under water. (Hist. Plant. iv. 8.) Pliny also speaks of it. (xiii. 50.)

From the circumstance of the dove bringing an olive leaf in her mouth to Noah, it was always looked upon in the east as a bird of good omen, whilst an olive branch became the symbol of peace and joy. (2 Maccab. xiv. 4. Virg. Æn. vi. 230.)

12. *And he waited yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove, and she returned not again unto him any more.*

"And he waited:" the verb יָחַל (*yachal*) employed here and also in verse 10, is often used with the accessory meaning to wait with confidence. Noah did not lose his trust in the Lord, but waited patiently, in faith feeling confident that God in his appointed time would again render the earth habitable and release him from the confinement in the ark.

13. *And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.*

As the open air is the natural element for birds, the circumstance of the dove not returning again to the ark, was no absolute proof that the waters had entirely left the surface of the ground. It merely showed that they had sufficiently decreased to enable the bird to find a suitable resting place and food. Noah waited therefore some time—the time is not accounted for in the narrative—but on the first day of the first month, in the six hundred and first year of his life, he "removed the covering of the ark," in order that he might obtain a full view of the sur-

rounding country, and thus ascertain the real state of the ground. "And behold, the face of the ground was dry"; this can, however, only mean, that the surface of the ground was free from water, that no water was to be seen upon it, but that it was still saturated, for in verse 14 it is distinctly stated that, "in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month was the earth dry"; that is no less than fifty-seven days after the removing of the covering of the ark. The Hebrew student will see that in the original there are three distinct verbs employed to express the gradual decrease of the water. In verse 11 we have the verb קָלַךְ (*kallu*) "they were diminished," or "become light;" in verse 13 we have the verb חָרַבַּר (*charevu*) "was dry," that is, so far that no more water was to be seen upon it; and in verse 14 we have the verb יָבֵשָׁה (*yaveshah*) "completely dry." Luther renders the verb in verse 13 "*trocken*," i. e., dry; and the verb in verse 14 "*ganz trocken*," i. e., perfectly dry. And so many of the German commentators make the distinction by rendering the last verb by "*völlig trocken*," i. e., entirely dry. As the Hebrew word מִכְסָּה (*michseh*) "covering" is in Exod. xxvi. 14. Num. iv. 8, used in reference to a covering of skins, some interpreters have erroneously supposed, that a similar covering is spoken of here. The word here denotes the roof of the ark, correctly rendered in the Septuagint by *στέγη*, *roof*.

14. *And in the second month on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dry.*

According to ch. vi. 17, the flood commenced in the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, and the 17th day of the month, and according to our verse the earth became perfectly dry on the 27th of the second month of the 601st year of Noah's life, the duration of the flood was therefore one year and ten days.

15. *And God spake unto Noah, saying :*

16. *Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives, with thee.*

Accustomed as Noah was to an open air life, the long confinement in the ark must have been wearisome to him, and yet, though he knew that the earth was dry, he did not leave the ark until God commanded him to do so. He trusted in the Lord, and felt sure, that as God had bid him to enter the ark, He would also, when the proper time, arrived bid him to leave it.

20. *And Noah built an altar to the LORD ; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*

Although this is the first time that the altar is mentioned, yet as sacrifices had been offered before the flood, no doubt, a suitable place was always constructed for it ; and hence it is here merely said, that " Noah built an altar," implying that he built it in such a manner as was acceptable to God. The Hebrew word for altar is **מִזְבֵּחַ** (*mizbeach*) derived from the verb **זָבַח** (*zavach*) to sacrifice, and hence, the term signifies a place on which sacrifices were offered. The English word altar is derived from the Latin *altus*, high, because originally the altar was made of raised mounds of earth, or rough stone. (See Exod. xx. 24, 25.) The altar which Moses commanded Joshua to build on Mount Ebal, was to be of unpolished stones. (Deut. xxvii. 5.) And no doubt those constructed by Samuel, Saul, and David were of the same material. The altar which Solomon built in the temple was of brass, but supposed to have been filled in with stones. (2 Chron. iv. 1, 2, 3.) The altar built by Zerubbabel, after the return from the Babylonish captivity was also of rough stones; and so was that of the Maccabees. Josephus says, that the altar which was in his time in the temple was of rough stones, fifteen cubits high, forty long, and forty wide. (Wars b. vi. ch. 14.) " And took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl;" this sacrifice of Noah was unique, neither before nor afterwards was such a magnificent animal sacrifice offered up. All the clean animals and fowls contributed to this grand offering which the pious patriarch brought both as a sin and thank-offering in gratitude to the Almighty who had preserved him and his family.

The Hebrew word for burnt-offering is **עֹלָה** (*olah*), and literally means an *ascent-offering*, so called because every part except the skin was consumed and thus rose from the altar to heaven, and not as Gesenius and others explain, that it was so called, " because they were carried up and laid on the altar." The skin belonged to the officiating priest. The sacrifice denoted by the term **זֶבַח** (*zevach*), differed from the former, inasmuch as it was not entirely burned. If it was a sacrifice for sin, or expiation, or for the purification of a person who had committed an offence against the law, the officiating priest received a part of it. If the sacrifice was brought as a thank-offering or peace-offering, the fat only was burned upon the altar, the fat being regarded as the best part; except if the victim was a lamb or ram, in that case the rump was added. The breast and right shoulder went to the priest, but all the rest belonged to the sacrificer, who, with his family, and friends, and invited poor, eat it. This partaking of the peace-offering betokened the

enjoyment of communion with God, in the gifts which His mercy had bestowed, of which the choicest portion was offered to Him, a portion to His servants the priests, and to His poor, who according to Deut. xvi. 10, 11, were to be invited to these sacrificial feasts. Hence the Psalmist says :

"Of thee my praise *shall be* in the great congregation.
My vows I will pay before them that fear him.
The meek shall eat and be satisfied."

(Ps. xxii. 26, 27. Eng. Ver. 25, 26.

At the feasts when these thank-offerings were offered his oppressed brethren should take part in them, they should eat and be joyful.

21. *And the LORD smelled a sweet savour ; and the LORD said in his heart : I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth ; neither will I again smite any more every living being, as I have done.*

"And the LORD smelled a sweet savour," that is, the sacrifices which the righteous patriarch offered were pleasing to the LORD. The expression "sweet savour" (Hebrew ריח הניחוח (*reach hannichoach*) *smell of rest or satisfaction* when used in connection with sacrifices, is identical in meaning with *delight* or *pleasure*, and hence *acceptable*. Thus Lev. i. 9, we read, "and the priest shall burn the whole on the altar for a burnt-offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord," that is, *acceptable* unto the Lord. So again, Lev. xxvi. 31, "I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours," *i.e.*, I will not *accept* your sacrifices. St. Paul, too, employed the phrase in his Epistle to the Ephesians, v. 2.

"And the LORD said in His heart," an anthropomorphic expression, merely denoting, the Lord *determined*. "I will not again curse the ground for man's sake." The Lord accepted the sacrifices of Noah as the acknowledgement on the part of man that he desires reconciliation with God, and gives the gracious promise that the earth should not be again visited by : which would destroy every living being ; "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," and, therefore, He will have compassion on his infirmities. Sin, indeed, cannot go unpunished, yet though He will not overlook his evil deeds, He will no more destroy him from off the face of the earth.

22. *While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer, and winter, and day and night shall not cease.*

This verse contains another gracious promise, namely, that as long as the earth endures, or as the original has it, "all the

days of the earth," the natural change, of the season shall not be suspended again, as had been the case during the time of the flood, but seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, should alternate in their regular order. The ancient Hebrews were accustomed to divide the year into two halves, namely, summer, with its heat and dryness, and its harvest (Comp. Is. xviii. 4; Jer. viii. 20); and winter, with its rain and cold, its ploughing and sowing (Comp. Jer. xxxvi. 22; Prov. xx. 4). If the reader will bear in mind, this division of the year, the force and beauty of some passages will more clearly be seen. Thus, for instance, Solomon says :

The sluggard will not plant on account of cold :
He seeketh in the harvest, and there is nothing. (Prov. xx. 4.)

CHAPTER IX.

1. *And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth.*

2. *And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air ; on all that moveth upon the ground, and on all the fishes of the sea ; into your hand they are delivered.*

The Divine blessing bestowed upon Noah and his sons is couched in the same language as the blessing with which God blessed our first parents after their creation : " Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth," for with Noah commences the history of the human family from a second beginning. The depravity of man had indeed brought down upon him a fearful punishment, but it did not extinguish the love and mercy of God, for these endure for ever, and thus the sacred narrative tells us that here, like in the very beginning, God bestowed the same Divine blessing upon the second ancestor of the human race to replenish the earth. God constitutes Noah also the lord and ruler over all the brute creation ; but here there is a marked difference in the language to that employed in Gen. i. 28, where it is said, " and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth ;" but in our passage we have the declaration, that " the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth." The difference in the lan-

guage clearly indicates a great change to have taken place in the disposition and habits of the animals. Before sin had entered into the world peace and harmony reigned among all creatures, but after that event their propensities became changed, gentleness and docility were supplanted by untractableness and ferocity. God, therefore, gives Noah the assurance, that notwithstanding this change in their nature, there should always exist among the animal creation a "dread" of man. The language of our passage must, however, not be construed to set forth that the same degree of "fear" and "dread" of man should exist in all animals, but rather that this "fear" and "dread" exist in a greater or lesser degree in all the brute creation.

3. *Every moving thing that liveth shall be to you for food; as the green herb I give to you all.*

In this verse we have, for the first time, set forth the permission of killing animals for food. Up to this time man was only appointed to have "dominion" over the animals, but this "dominion" did not extend to taking their life except for sacrifice. "As the green herb I give you all things," alludes to the primitive grant made to man, Gen. i. 29, when God appointed to him "every herb" and "fruit of a tree" for food. And though, probably, animal food had been made use of before the flood, if so, it was certainly without any direct Divine permission having been given. "Every moving thing," in the original the word רֶמֶשׂ (*remes*) is employed, which is applied to reptiles, creeping things, but is here used in a general sense for every thing that moveth. "That liveth;" this expression clearly implies that only animals that were killed for the purpose of food were allowed to be eaten, and not such as had died of themselves, or had been killed otherwise. "I give you all." From this emphatic expression, at the end of the verse, it is quite evident that there is here no distinction made between the clean and unclean animals as was later under the Mosaic dietary laws. Many of the eminent Rabbinic writers regard the permission to use animal food as a providential provision, being necessary on account of the change of temperature that had taken place after the flood.

4. *Only the flesh with its life, which is its blood, ye shall not eat.*

The permission to eat animal food is accompanied with the proviso that flesh in which there is still blood must not be eaten, because the blood is the life of the animal, and the life belongs to God. The commandment contained in our verse is again laid down by Moses with great force and distinctness,

and a reason for its strict observance assigned. "And any man of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourn among them, that eat any blood; and I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and I will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement by the life." Or as it may be rendered, "for the life," or "for the soul,"* as in the Authorized Version. (Lev. xvii. 10, 11, *et seq.*) The blood is the life of the animal, and that life is to be offered up to God on the altar as an expiation for the soul or life of him who brings the sacrifice which God might have demanded for his sins.

Some commentators have indeed erroneously regarded the prohibition in our verse as merely directed against the eating of raw meat, such as has been, and is still, practised among some of the less civilized people, as among some of the tribes in Abyssinia, the Esquimaux, and others. Or against the still more barbarous practice of cutting pieces of flesh from a living animal, and devouring them raw with the blood streaming from it, as was frequently done in the idolatrous worship of some heathen nations. The celebrated Rabbi Maimonides, who, in order to enable him more fully to set forth the importance of some of the Mosaic laws, has, at the risk of his life, collected a great deal of information regarding the practices of fierce and barbarous people in their idolatrous worship, and has given numerous instances of the horrible custom of cutting pieces from live animals. And the modern travellers Bruce and Madden testify that the practice still exists among some of the Abyssinians, and relate several revolting instances which they have themselves seen. Now, whilst we are ready to admit that the prohibition in our verse may probably have been also directed against such savage customs as those we have alluded to—though we have not the slightest proof that such existed in those early times—yet we must still insist upon that received by the light of the passage we have quoted from Leviticus; its primary aim was to attach to *blood* a peculiar sacredness as containing or representing the life of the animal, and which was to be solemnly offered up upon the altar. Our verse does not prohibit the eating of uncooked meat, but merely the blood in a separate state.

* The Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ (*nephesh*), which is employed both in our verse and in Lev. xvii. 10, 11, denotes both *soul* and *life*, and the context alone must guide which of the two words is to be used in translation. Thus Isa. liii. 12, "Because he poured out נֶפֶשׁ (*nephesh*) his soul unto death," i. e., he gave his life.

5. *And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it: and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man.*

"Your blood, *the blood of your lives, will I require.*" On account of the somewhat peculiar phraseology of the passage **את דמכם לנפשתיכם** (*eth dimchem lenaphshothechem*) it has been rendered in different ways. In the Authorized Version, it is translated "your blood of your lives," and so in the Septuagint, the Syriac, and Vulgate Versions, and also by some modern commentators, but this rendering is on philological grounds inadmissible.* Some Rabbinic writers render "I shall demand your blood from your souls," and explain it as a prohibition against suicide, which is not only against the tenor of the passage, but would also require the reading **מנפשתיכם** (*minnaphshothechem*). The rendering which we have given, and which is also given in the Revised Version, brings out the sense of the passage fully, and is quite admissible, as frequently a word has to be supplied from a previous clause, in order to complete the sense. "At the hand of every beast will I require it;" not only is man to suffer death for the murder he has committed, but the beast also which has shed human blood must be removed from the earth. Hence the commandment, Exod. xxi. 28, "And if an ox gore a man or a woman, that he die, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten." This commandment is generally understood as applying to all animals, and that the goring of an ox is only given as an instance. Indeed, the Samaritan codex has **שור או כל בהמה** (*shor o col behemah*) an ox or any beast.

The infliction of punishment upon animals for killing a human being was evidently also adopted by other nations from the Mosaic laws, who, however, extended it to inanimated things. Thus Draco (Greek Drakon), an eminent Athenian lawgiver, born about 624 B.C., and therefore lived about the time of the prophet Jeremiah, actually ordered a stone sword or club with which a man was killed to be prosecuted, if the murderer himself could not be discovered. Solon, the most renowned of all the ancient Greek lawgivers, born about 638 B.C., who softened the severity of the laws of Draco, still retained in full rigour the laws in respect to the punishment for murder. One of his laws went so far as to cause a dog who bit any one to be bound and delivered over to justice. A statue at Athens, which fell and killed a person, was punished as a murderer. And so late as the year 1540, a sword wherewith a murder had been committed at *Toulouse* was, by a sentence

* **לנפשתיכם** cannot be taken as a genitive after **דמכם** a substantive with a pronominal suffix.

of the Parliament, hung upon a gallows because the murderer himself could not be discovered. (See J. D. Michaelis's Com. on the laws of Moses, vol. 4, pp. 234, 235.) This infliction of punishment on inanimated things may appear ridiculous in our eyes, it however shows how sacred human blood was regarded.

"And at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man;" all men are in Scripture regarded as brethren, they having one common origin: compare Lev. xix. 17; Ps. xlix. 8 (Eng. Vers. v. 7). The expression "every man's brother" therefore means, *whosoever he may be*, since he is the slain man's brother. Our passage, accordingly, does not merely have reference to the custom of blood revenge by the nearest relative, as some writers have restricted its meaning, it imposes on the regular constituted authorities the duty to strictly carry out the injunction, to see that the shedding of human blood is properly avenged. In the Chaldee Version the passage is freely rendered: "At the hand of the man who sheds his brother's blood will I require the life of man." If, indeed, there were any doubt as to the exact meaning of the phrase "of every man's brother," that doubt would be set at rest by the plain language in the next verse.

6. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man.*

Luther has rightly remarked: "This was the first command having reference to the temporal sword. By these words temporal government was established, and the sword placed in its hand by God." The expressions, "of every man's brother," "by man shall his blood be shed," do not give permission to every one to take vengeance on the murderer, this was under the Mosaic laws restricted to the *גֹּאֵל* (*goel*) i. e., the nearest relative to the person murdered, and the regular constituted authorities. The Scriptures nowhere permit revenge. The shedding of blood must also have been wilfully and maliciously; the taking of life unintentionally, and without previous malice, was not to be avenged. (See Deut. xix. 4.) In the Chaldee Version the phrase, "by man shall his blood be shed," is paraphrased "with witnesses by the sentence of the judges shall his blood be shed." As the divinely appointed judges represented the authority of God they are called *אֱלֹהִים* (*Elohim*) "gods:" "I said, ye are gods," (Ps. lxxxii. 8.)

"For in the image of God made He him;" here we have the enormity of the crime of murder fully set forth; he that taketh human life obliterates the image of God in man, and therefore, as Philo Judæus calls it, a sacrilege on the likeness of God in man, to be punished even when caused by an animal. Hence Scripture represents the blood of the slain to cry for vengeance

to heaven, Gen. iv., 10, and demands that the wilful murderer was even to be taken from the altar of God to suffer death. Nay more, in 1 Kings ii., 28-34, there is an instance where the murderer was, at the command of Solomon, slain at the very altar. It is impossible to conceive how Scripture could have set forth the enormity of the crime of wilful murder more forcibly and explicitly, and prescribe in language more plainly the punishment with which it was to be visited. This then brings us face to face with the important subject regarding *capital punishment*, which from time to time attracts so much attention in the legislative halls of different countries. It is urged by the advocates for the abolition of capital punishment, that by imprisonment for life, or for a lengthy time, with hard labour, greater torments are inflicted on the imprisoned murderer than by an instantaneous death, and serves just as well to free the public from the presence of a dangerous felon, as if capital punishment had been inflicted. But this argument evades altogether the important question, whether it is in the power of earthly rulers to abrogate the sentence which the Almighty Himself has passed: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." It is indeed argued that the civil laws of Moses were never intended to be absolutely unalterable, that even Moses himself altered some. No doubt many of those laws were instituted as the exigencies of the times, and the existing state of society required them, and that, therefore, when the necessity for them has ceased to exist, there could be no objection to abolish them. As an instance, the institution of *goëllism*, or blood revenge by the nearest relative, is appealed to, which was an absolute necessity in those early days before regular constituted magistrates and judges existed, otherwise the murderer would have gone unpunished; but when, in the course of time, regular tribunals of justice were established, the system of blood revenge gradually fell in disuse, and is only now found to subsist in full force among the Arabians. Other Mosaic laws are referred to as being no longer regarded obligatory. Hooker, one of the most illustrious writers and thinkers, remarks on this subject: "Laws, though both ordained of God himself, and the end for which they were ordained continuing, may notwithstanding cease, if, by alteration of persons or times, they be found insufficient to attain unto that end. In which respect why may we not presume that God doth even call for such change or alteration as the very condition of things themselves doth make necessary?" (Vol. i. p. 398.) All this is no argument against the punishment imposed for murder in Scripture, for neither "alteration of persons or times" have rendered it "insufficient," on the contrary, experience has amply proved its wisdom and necessity. We have seen, whenever governments allowed themselves to be influenced by the voice

of the populace, rather than be guided by the voice of the Almighty, and abolished capital punishment, the crime of murder increased so fearfully as to compel them to replace the death penalty again in their criminal codes. Then, as regards imprisonment for life "inflicting greater torments than instantaneous death," it nevertheless does not strike with the same terror as capital punishment, as is quite evident from the fact that invariably the utmost efforts are made to obtain a reprieve. But apart from this, expediency must here be left altogether out of the question. God, in His infinite Wisdom, has declared "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," and the principle on which the act of taking human life was regarded by the Almighty as a capital crime is stated on its highest grounds, "for in the image of God made He man." And here it is important to bear in mind, that this commandment, when first promulgated, was not given to the Hebrews as a nation, so that it might be said to be obligatory on that nation only, but was given to Noah and his sons, by whom the world was re-peopled after the flood, and is, therefore, obligatory on all the nations of the world. And this will account for murder being universally punished with death, even among the savage nations. There are *three* commandments which altogether preclude the plea of being only binding on the Israelites, they having been given long before they became a nation, namely, *the keeping of the Sabbath*, instituted Gen. ii. 2; *marriage*, instituted ch. ii. 24; and the commandment in our verse. Indeed, according to the Talmud, there were *seven* commandments, called "שבע מצוות בני נח" (*sheva mitswoth bene Noah*) seven commandments of the sons of Noah, which were binding on all men, as having been given to Noah and his sons, or as some of the Rabbinical writers maintain, "dating back to the time of Adam." (Talmud, Sanhedrim, Moimoides, Hilch, Melach., ix., 1.) These are, 1 blasphemy, 2 idolatry, 3 murder, 4 incest as regards the forbidden degree of marriage, 5 plunder, 6 disobedience against the authorities of the state, and 7 the eating of flesh cut from a living animal. These seven laws even strangers dwelling among the ancient Israelites were required to observe strictly.

8. And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9. And I, behold I am establishing My covenant with you, and with your seed after you ;

10. And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you ; from all that go out of the ark to every beast of the earth.

What God (ch. viii. 21) had determined in his heart is here formulated into a solemn and unalterable covenant, and declared

to Noah and his sons. In this covenant of mercy the animals are likewise included, for they had also been smitten by the anger of God. "I am establishing my covenant with you;" not indeed that man has any claim upon the Almighty—for a covenant implies a mutual compact—but by an act of His infinite mercy He was pleased to enter voluntarily into an engagement with His creatures; and thus show forth His boundless love, in order to inspire man with confidence to look up to Him as a loving Father, who cares for the welfare of His children. "From all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth." The phraseology of this passage is somewhat peculiar in the original, but its obvious meaning is, that the covenant is not confined to the animals only that went out of the ark, but extends to all the animals of the earth.

11. *And I will establish My covenant with you; and no more shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.*

This verse sets forth the import of the covenant, that though some portions of the earth might, from time to time, be visited with an inundation, which may cause great destruction, and entail a great deal of misery, yet there never should occur such a flood by which all living things should be destroyed. And are we truly thankful for the unspeakable comfort which this gracious promise affords?—a promise which relieves us for ever of all fear of another flood. We may also remark that the promise which God here calls a "covenant," in alluding to it in Isaiah, He calls it an oath:

For this is as the waters of Noah to me;
For as I have sworn
That the waters of Noah should no more
Go over the earth:
So have I sworn
That I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee.

(Is. liv. 9.)

God's promises being sure to be fulfilled, are solemn oaths in substance, though they are not so in form.

12. *And God said, This is the sign of the covenant which I give between Me and you, and between every living creature that is with you, for eternal generations.*

13. *I constitute my bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and between the earth.*

God not only condescended to conclude a covenant with His creatures, but He constituted, at the same time, a visible sign of the world's covenant, which was constantly to remind

man of this gracious act, and the heart-cheering promises which it conveys. And what could have been more appropriate for such a sign than the marvellous arch suddenly appearing in the still cloud-covered part of heaven after rain, whose beauty, whilst it charms the eyes, at the same time impresses the mind with the omnipotence of the Creator. No wonder that so many nations have looked with special reverence upon the rainbow, and have connected with its appearance religious ideas, and that the ancient Greeks, apparently in reference to its emblematical signification, should have called it *Ips* (*Iris*), which Eustathius derives from *ειπω*, to tell, to carry a message, and was afterwards deified as the messenger of the gods. The Persians, too, have regarded the rainbow as a divine messenger; and on an ancient picture is seen portrayed a winged boy on a rainbow, and an old man kneeling before him. (Stolberg, *Gesch. der Rel.* i. 64.) Some of the inhabitants of South America likewise worshipped the rainbow as a benign goddess. And the old Scandinavians regarded the rainbow as a bridge constructed by the gods to connect heaven and earth. (Rosenmüller *Morgenl.* I, 44.) We must now draw the reader's attention to the rendering given of our verse in the Authorized Version, and which is also retained in the Revised Version, which is as follows: "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth." Now this rendering, it will be perceived, conveys the idea that the rainbow never existed before, whereas, when we take into consideration that this beautiful phenomenon is the natural result of the refraction and reflection of the sun's rays falling on drops of water on the occurrence of a sunny shower, it must have been seen over and over again in the clouds during the 1656 years that elapsed between the creation and the deluge. The passage should be rendered, "I do constitute my bow in the clouds," it becomes, then, at once intelligible, and strikingly beautiful. The rainbow, although often seen before, was not until then appointed as a sign and pledge of the promise made to Noah. The beautiful phenomenon, which no doubt often enchanted its beholders, has now been made of peculiar significance—nothing less than the visible sign of a covenant between the eternal Jehovah and frail man. The verb *נָתַן* (*nathan*) has, in common with most Hebrew verbs, several shades of signification, namely, to give, to set, to constitute, to appoint, &c.; the rendering in the English Version is, therefore, not actually a mistranslation of the Hebrew verb, but rather an unhappy choice from its various significations. Numerous passages can be adduced where the verb is used in the sense to constitute, or to appoint; thus Genesis xvii. 5, "for a father of many nations I have consti-

ted thee." (Authorized Version, "I have made thee.") Also "See, I have appointed thee a god to Pharoah." (Authorized Version, "See, I have made thee." Again, Num. xiv. 4, "Let us appoint a captain." (Author's Version, "Let us make a captain.) And so in many other places. According to the eminent Rabbi Maimonides, the ancient Jews were accustomed, on beholding the rainbow, to bless God for mercifully remembering his covenant, and faithfully keeping it. And Jesus, the son of Sirach, says, "Look upon the rainbow, and praise Him that made it."

16. *And the bow shall be in the cloud ; and I will look upon it,* to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.*

The expression, "I shall remember my covenant," in the preceding verse, and the expression, "to remember the everlasting covenant," in our verse, do not imply the possibility of God forgetting his promises at any time, they simply convey to us, in plain and forcible language, the immutableness of the Almighty's declarations. God unites here in the phrase נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה בְּכֹל בָּשָׂר (*nephesh chayah bechol basar*), all living creatures, from man down to the most insignificant creature, all are embraced in this everlasting covenant of peace.

18. *And the sons of Noah, who went out of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth ; and Ham is the father of Canaan.*

As Ham hath other sons besides Canaan, the question naturally arises, why this one should have been particularly mentioned here? It seems to me the only satisfactory answer is, that although the other descendants of Ham were idolators, and sunk in wickedness, yet the descendants of Canaan greatly exceeded them in wicked deeds and acts of cruelty, and the sacred writer, therefore, in exclusively mentioning him, desires to convey the information that Ham was the father of Canaan, who was the progenitor of the Canaanites, the most wicked and depraved of all the races. (See more on this subject, vol. 1, p. cii., *et. seq.*)

20. *And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard :*

We are not obliged to infer from the expression, "And Noah began to be a husbandman," that he may not have followed this occupation before the flood; but merely that he resumed the

* The verb לִזְכֹּר (*lizkor*) is, in the Authorized Version, and also in the Revised Version rendered, "that I may remember." The literal rendering, however, is "to remember," which I have given.

occupation of a husbandman. In Scripture a person who continues or resumes an action is sometimes spoken of as beginning it. Thus ch. vi. 1, it is said, "When men began to multiply," but we know that men multiplied before: the expression means, when men *continued* to multiply. In the New Testament the verb *begin* is sometimes used redundantly. Compare, for instance, Mark xi. 15. Christ is said to "begin to cast out," and Luke xii. 1, to "begin to say," where, in the parallel places, Matt. xxi. 12, it is only said "cast out," and Matt. xvi. 6, "said." And so likewise in regard to Noah planting a vineyard, we are not obliged to suppose that wine was not cultivated before the flood, but merely that among other agricultural operations he also planted a vineyard. Modern travellers testify that "nowhere is the vine found to grow so spontaneously, and in such an abundance and excellence as in the region of Ararat, in Armenia, and the eastern Pontus." And it is worthy of notice, that as from the sons of Noah the earth was repopled after the flood, we have the remarkable coincident, that the Hebrew term for wine יַיִן (*yayin*) is found, with slight variation, in many eastern and western languages. Thus Greek *oivos*; Latin, *vinum*; Italian and Spanish, *vino*; German, *Wein*; French, *vin*; Welsh, *gwim*; Cimbric, *Uin*; Dutch, *wijn*; Danish, *vien*. Some of the heathen nations ascribe the invention of wine to their deities, thus the Egyptians attributed it to Osiris (many eyed); the Phœnicians and Greeks to Bacchus, and the Romans to Saturn.

21. *And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.**

"And he drank of the wine," the Hebrew term for "wine," here employed is, יַיִן (*yayin*), the derivation of the word is doubtful, though Gesenius and some other writers, derive it from an obsolete root, יָרַן (*yon*) to boil up, to be in a ferment. But though there is an uncertainty as to the etymology of the word, there exists not the slightest doubt as to the inebriating quality of the product denoted by it. The statement in our verse is sufficient proof on this point. But there are many other passages in Scripture where the word occurs which distinctly refer to its intoxicating quality. Thus Gen. xlix. 12: "Sparkling are his eyes (*miyayin*) from wine." Isaiah exclaims:

Woe unto them who rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink:

And continue till after twilight till wine inflame them." Is. v. ii.

*אֶחָדָם לְאֶחָדָם so again, Ch. xii. 8, Ch. xlix. 11; and in other places.

"Wine," says Solomon, is a mocker, strong drink is boisterous, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. xx. i.) Wine is even used for drunkenness itself; thus, 1 Sam. i. 14: "And Eli said unto her how long wilt thou be drunken? put away ייִנֶכֶךְ, (*yenech*) thy wine from thee;" i. e., put away thy drunkenness from thee." And so in other places. On account of the intoxicating quality of the wine, we find in Lev. x. 9, the precautionary command to Aaron: "Do not drink (*yayin*) wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die." When they were to perform their sacred duties, they were entirely forbidden to drink it, for even the tasting might lead to intemperance. And Philo, in speaking of the wisdom of this command, enumerates four results which the drinking of wine produces, "hesitation, forgetfulness, sleep, and folly." Against the non-observance of this command, the prophet Isaiah afterwards bitterly cries out: "The priest and prophet have erred through strong drink, and are disordered by wine." (Is. xxviii. 7.) A similar prohibition existed also among some of the heathen nations. The Egyptian priests, and those that were about to be initiated into the mysteries of Isis, were not allowed to taste wine. Among the Persian Magi, a similar law prevailed. Among several Greek tribes there existed a custom, that if any one intended to perform some sacred act, or wished to consult an oracle, he was to abstain from food on that day, but from wine three days previously.

Another term for *wine* of very frequent occurrence, is תִּירוֹשׁ (*tirosh*), which is derived from the verb יָרַשׁ (*yarash*) to seize, to possess, and is, according to Gesenius and others, so called "because it gets possession of the brain and inebriates." The correctness of this derivation, we must say, admits of some doubt. No doubt the word is derived from יָרַשׁ (*yarash*) to possess, but we would rather favour the supposition of its being so called, because the *product* or *products* denoted by it constituted, to a more or less extent, the possession of the husbandmen from the remotest times. We have several cogent reasons for adopting this view. In the first place, the term *tirosh* is frequently used in connection with דָּגָן (*dagan*) corn, especially in the bestowing of blessings, and we assume, therefore, that wherever these two terms are employed together, the term *dagan* is used to represent all kinds of *grain produce*, whilst *tirosh* represents all kinds of *liquid produce*. Such an application of the terms adds force to all the passages in which they occur. Take, for instance, the blessing of Isaac: "Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven and fatness of the earth, and plenty of דָּגָן וְתִירוֹשׁ (*dagan vethirosh*) corn and wine;"

that is, plenty of all kinds of grain and liquid produce. (Gen. xxvii., 28.) The reader may compare also Deut. xxiii., 28; 2 Kings xviii., 32; and Is. xxxvi., 17.* In the Authorized Version, and in the Revised Version, the word is sometimes rendered "new wine," and sometimes merely "wine," and from Hos. iv., 2, where both words occur together, "wine and new wine (*yayin* and *tirosh*) take away the heart," it is evident that there is some difference in the product denoted by the two terms. (See also Micah vi., 15.) All the passages in which the word *tirosh* occurs seem to indicate that *new wine*, the *wine crop* of the season, is denoted by it; thus in Isaiah lxxv., 8, it is said that "the new wine (*tirosh*) is found in the cluster." The question whether *tirosh* is of an inebriating nature is satisfactorily answered by the passage of Hosea above quoted, where "new wine," as well as "wine," is said "to take away the heart." In wine countries it is well known that *new wine* intoxicates, although its effects are not so soon felt as in the case of *old wine*.

Another term for *wine* is חמר (*chemer*), and is so called from the process of fermenting which the juice of the grape passes through, being derived from the root חמר (*chamar*) to ferment. Moses, in his highly poetic and sublime address to the Israelites, Deut. xxxii., 14, says:

"And of the blood of the grape thou didst drink (*chemer*) wine."

In the Authorized Version it is freely rendered "and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape." This word is also found in all the Semitic languages.

The wine used in religious services was always יין (*yayin*), thus it is said, "and the drink offering thereof shall be of יין (*yayin*) wine, the fourth part of a hin;" i. e., two pints and a half (Lev. xxiii. 15). The modern Jews, in order to make sure that the *wine* used for religious purposes is pure, make it a practice to procure it directly from the vineyard by one of their own people.

From the great piety of the patriarch Noah, we think we may safely conclude that the act of intoxication was committed through inadvertency, of which he afterwards bitterly repented. Noah may not have been aware of the power and mischief that lies concealed in the juice of the grapes, or his infirm, old age may have rendered him more readily affected by it. But although the act was not committed wilfully, the record of it still stands as an imperishable memorial, that the first act of

* We have a parallel case in the word מִקְנֶה (*mikneh*), which denotes both *cattle* and *possession* from the verb קנה (*kanah*) to possess, as the wealth of the nomadic tribes consisted of cattle.

drunkenness ever recorded was the cause of a fearful curse, and the heartrending miseries daily brought to our notice, which are caused by intoxication, only too clearly and fearfully demonstrate that the curse still follows with unerring steps the drunkard's path.*

We frequently hear the remark, "unfermented wine," but this surely cannot mean wine made from the juice of the grapes, for such a thing would be altogether impossible. The fermentation, after the juice is pressed from the grapes, is altogether a matter of time, depending on the state of the temperature. The first fermentation in a moderate climate generally reaches its highest point in five or six days. After two or three weeks the fluid becomes comparatively clear, when the wine is then removed from the sediment which has been formed into another vessel, and a slow fermentation, called *after fermentation*, goes on for several months, during that time the sugar is constantly converted into alcohol and carbonic acid, and a precipitation is forming at the bottom of the vessel. Several changes into other vessels are made in order to get rid of the sediment.

22. *And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told it to his two brothers without.*

Ham, as the context clearly implies, was of a frivolous and unchaste disposition. He might, indeed, accidentally have come into the tent and saw his father thus exposed, but had he possessed the least filial respect, he would have acted in a manner as his brothers did, and reverentially covered his aged father. But instead of doing so, he evidently with shameless delight proclaimed it to his brothers. This wicked act called for a severe punishment, and hence Noah, on being made aware of the unnatural and impious conduct of Ham, pronounced an everlasting malediction against him, which is recorded in the following verses:

24. *And when Noah awoke from his wine, and learned what his younger son had done to him,*

25. *And he said,*

Cursed be Canaan,
A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.

26. *And he said,*

Blessed be the LORD God of Shem ;
And Canaan shall be a servant to him.
God will enlarge Japheth,
And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem ;
And Canaan shall be a servant to him.

* There is a proverb in the Talmud, "If wine moves in, knowledge moves out."

It appears from verse 24, that Noah on awakening from his wine was informed of the shameful behaviour of Ham. Most likely the two brothers being horror stricken at the conduct of their brother, thought it their duty to inform their father of it. "And learned what his younger son had done to him." In the Authorized Version it is rendered, "and knew what his younger son had done unto him," and many commentators inferred from this rendering, that the conduct of Ham was supernaturally revealed to Noah. But the verb יָדַע (*yada*), although its primary signification is *to know*, is sometimes used also in the sense *to learn*, either from seeing a thing or hearing of it. (See Heb. Bible, Exod. ii. 4; Deut. xi. 2.) It is, therefore, unnecessary to suppose a supernatural revelation to Noah. "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be." In the malediction here pronounced there are two important questions presented to us which demand a careful consideration. In the first place, how can we account for Ham being the actual offender, and yet the curse was not directed against him, but against his son Canaan who apparently took no part in the transaction? In the second place, was not the denunciation too severe for the offence? As regards the first question, many commentators have maintained that the only satisfactory reply is to be found in the declaration contained in the second commandment of the decalogue, "for I the LORD God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." (Exod. xx. 5.) But this reply could only be regarded as satisfactory, if the malediction had been pronounced against all the sons of Ham. Why the curse is only directed against the descendants of Canaan, and not against the descendants of Cush, Mizraim, and Phut, also, is a point which would still remain unexplained. We must, therefore, seek for a more satisfactory solution of the apparent difficulty.

That the utterance of Noah was not the result of any outburst of passion, but of Divine influence, is evident from the fact that he cursed Ham, not in himself, but in Canaan, upon whose descendants the penalty more directly fell. No ebullition of human anger could be imagined to predict future events, much less to effect their fulfilment to the very letter, whereas this prediction of Noah received a speedy partial accomplishment, and is still fulfilling to the present day. We have then, in this prediction of Noah, the earliest prophecy on record after the flood, and as it has been well said, "the act of Ham was rather the *occasion* than the *cause* of the prediction against Canaan." Then as regards the malediction being only pronounced against Canaan, and through him against his descendants, is accounted for by the fact that the Canaanitish nations

of which we have an account in the inspired writings were the most wicked and depraved of all the descendants of Ham's sons. But though the imprecation was only directed against Canaan, it is yet an undoubted fact that the curse of servitude fell likewise upon other branches of Ham's descendants; of these we need only to mention the African races as an example.

Then as regards the second question, whether the denunciation was too severe for the offence, we have already stated that the offence of Ham was not the *cause* of the malediction, but was rather made the *occasion* for the pronouncing of it. It was the utter depravity of the descendants of Ham that called forth this prophetic denunciation, and when their great wickedness is weighed together with their punishment in the balance of justice, the former will be found by far to outweigh the latter. In proof of this we need only turn to the history of the Canaanites as recorded in Scripture, and it will be found that from a very early period their morals were most deeply depraved, and their character marked by the commission of the most enormous crimes. Let the reader turn to Genesis xviii., xix., and read the account of what led to the destruction of Sodom and the three neighbouring cities, and it will give him an insight into the utter depravity of the Canaanites. Even the sons-in-law of Lot were so deeply sunk in wickedness that they would not listen to the voice of warning. Such a fearful punishment as that with which those cities were visited, one would have supposed, could not have failed to strike terror and exercise a beneficial influence on this wicked race, arousing them to the danger of persevering in their evil deeds. But such has been far from being the case. In the time of Moses we find the Canaanites not only addicted to the grossest practice of idolatry, but to the commission of the most abominable and revolting crimes—crimes such as should have never entered into the mind of any human being; but as they were so commonly indulged in by these idolatrous people, it became even necessary to mention them among the Mosaic prohibitory laws. (See Lev. xviii.) They immolated their children upon the altar of Moloch, and, before the very eyes of the parents, burned them to ashes. Yet, notwithstanding the great wickedness of this people, God, who is longsuffering, and does not delight in the death of a sinner, stayed his avenging hand so that they might turn from their wicked ways. During the five centuries that elapsed from Abraham to Joshua He permitted them to increase, and enjoy the gifts that a most fertile country could bestow; but, instead of relinquishing their evil practices, they became only more and more immersed in the filthiness of every species of vice, until at last their cup of iniquity was overflowing, and God delivered them into the hands of the Hebrews.

The great depravity of the Canaanites is testified to even by heathen writers. Thus Plutarch, the great Greek biographer and moralist, who flourished in the first century of the Christian era, in speaking of the Carthaginians, remarks: "Better would it have been to have a Critias or a Diogoras" (persons who did not believe in any supreme Being, and were famous for their impiety,) "for their law-giver, than have retained a religion so detestable for its human sacrifices. The Typhons and Giants, those enemies of the gods, if they had prevailed, could have instituted nothing worse." Other Classic writers have expressed themselves also decidedly upon this point.

It was in the time of Joshua that the prophetic denunciation of Noah began its fulfilment; it was in his time that they were first brought under the yoke of the *Shemites*. He invaded their land, smote upwards of thirty of their kings, and most of the inhabitants who escaped the edge of the sword were made servants and tributaries to the Israelites. The conquest began by Joshua was completed by Solomon, for "all the people that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and Hivites, and the Jebusites, which *were* not of Israel did Solomon make to pay tribute." (2 Chron. viii. 7, 8.) The great struggle between Rome and Carthage, which ended in the ruin of the latter, confirms the fulfilment of the prediction, Carthage being peopled by the descendants of Canaan; and the Romans being descendants of Japheth. And from that time the miserable remainder of this people have been slaves to a foreign yoke; first to the Saracenes, who descended from Shem, and afterwards to the Turks, who descended from Japheth, and under their dominion they groan at the present time. As regards the unhappy negroes, it need only be mentioned, how many thousands are every year sold and bought in the markets, and are conveyed from one quarter of the world to another, and subjected to the greatest hardships, of whom it can truly be said, that they are "servants of servants," *i. e.* most servile. The expression "servant of servants" is one of the Hebrew modes of expressing a superlative idea, like "vanity of vanities," *i. e.* the greatest vanity; "holy of holies," *i. e.* the most holy place; "song of songs" (the Hebrew title of the Song of Solomon), *i. e.*, the most excellent song.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem." The passage implies that God was "the God of Shem" in a special manner, and as connected with special privileges. And, accordingly, we find that in the family of Shem was preserved the true worship of God, and Israel's greatness consisted in being the chosen people of God; they were the "peculiar treasure" of God. (Exod. xix. 5.)

The prophetic declaration relating to Jepheth comprises two parts:

1. "God shall enlarge Japheth." The original reads **יפת אלהים ליפת** *Yapht elohim leyepheth*) where we have a paranomasia, or play of words, *i. e.* "God shall enlarge the enlarger." This prophetic declaration of Noah we have already shewn was literally fulfilled, both as to children and territory. Japheth had seven children, Ham only four, and Shem five. The descendants of Japheth's children spread over the whole of Europe, and a considerable part of Asia, and probably crossed over into America by Behring's Straits, from Kamschatka. "The northern hive," as Sir William Temple denominates it, has been always remarkable for its fecundity, and has been continually sending out colonies.

2. And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.

Some of the ancient interpreters make God the subject of the verb **וישבן** (*waiyishcon*) "and He shall dwell," and explain, that although He will bless Japheth with worldly blessings, yet He will bestow His spiritual blessings upon his chosen people Israel, among whom He will dwell. If this is the import of the passage, we have a literal fulfilment of it when the Shekinah, or Divine presence, rested on the ark, and dwelt in the Tabernacle and the Temple, so strikingly alluded to by the Psalmist:

God is known in Judah ;
Great is His name in Israel.
And in Salem is His tabernacle,
And His dwelling place is Zion. (Ps. lxxvi. 2, 3.)

In the Chaldee Version the passage is rendered, "He will make His glory to dwell in the tents of Shem.

Most commentators, however, make Japheth the subject of the verb **וישבן** (*waiyishcon*) "and he shall dwell," and this is no doubt the proper interpretation for several reasons. In the first place, in connection with the Divine presence dwelling in the Tabernacle or Temple, the sacred name **יהוה** Jehovah is always employed, whilst in our passage **אלהים** (*Elohim*), "God," is used. Secondly, the expression "in the tents of Shem," whilst applicable to Japheth—as we shall immediately shew—is not applicable to God, who only once had His abode "in a tent between curtains." (2 Sam. vii. 2.) And, thirdly, the statement that "Canaan shall be his servant," can hardly be interpreted in any other ways, than that he should be "a servant" to Japheth. According to the Targum of Jonathan (Chaldee Version) and most of the Patristic fathers, and whose opinion has also been espoused by many modern commentators, the fulfilment of the prediction that Japheth "shall dwell in the

tents of Shem," is to be consummated at the time of the Messiah, when the descendants of Japheth would join the Israelites in the worship of the Almighty, and when both would look upon Jerusalem as the spiritual centre. But this interpretation of the passage would be altogether adverse to the distinct declarations of the prophets, according to whose prophecies no nation will be excluded from the knowledge of God, and all nations of the earth will flock to Zion. Compare Is. ii. 2, 4; xviii. 7; Zeph. iii. 10; Zechar. viii. 20-23; xiv. 16; Ps. xxii. 28. In that glorious time, God will exclaim: "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hand, and Israel my inheritance." It will thus be seen that in that time the curse resting upon the descendants of Ham will be removed, and they as well as the descendants of Japheth, will bow down before the LORD. The declaration that Japheth "shall dwell in the tents of Shem," rather refers therefore to a peaceful dwelling together, and a friendly commercial intercourse between the Hebrews and the Japhetites, the latter probably conquered and occupied the northern and eastern parts of Palestine, and assisted the Israelites in their constant struggles against the remnants of the Canaanites scattered through the land, as a common foe.

29. *And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died;*

This verse concludes the first great Epoch of Scripture history. The celebrated traveller Burckhardt tells in his "Travels," vol. 1, p. 42, that in the little village of Kerak, in the region of Mount Lebanon, the people show a grave which they declare to be that of the prophet Noah.

CHAPTER X.

Although this chapter occurs before the eleventh chapter, yet in point of time it properly should come after it. This is evident from verse 31, where it is said, "These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues," which implies the existence of different languages, but which did not exist until after the confusion of tongues related in chapter XI. But such transpositions are not uncommon in Scripture.

1. *Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah; Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and to them were sons born after the flood.*

The sublime doctrine of the unity of mankind, had already been distinctly established in the original creation of one human pair. But all mankind except one family, having through their great wickedness been destroyed from the face of the earth, the sacred writer, therefore, makes in our verse the important statement, that from this family descended all the nations of the earth, and thus form one grand brotherhood. There is then as far as brotherhood is concerned, no difference between the descendants of the blessed Shem and the cursed descendants of Ham, as regards their origin they are brethren. This is the Bible doctrine from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures. Our chapter contains the most ancient ethnographic document that has come down to us, and as such it is of inestimable value. Its historic truthfulness is sufficiently attested by the fact that there is not the slightest attempt made in this remarkable genealogical record, to give the least pre-eminence of one nation over another. It is necessary to observe that in as much as proper names are very liable to undergo changes in their being transferred from one language to another, it is, therefore, not to be wondered at, that some of the names of the nations have, in course of time become so altered as to render it difficult to identify them with those given in our chapter. Still, there exists happily no difficulty in tracing most all *leading nations* to their patriarchal progenitors as given in our list.

2. *The sons Japheth; Gomer and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.*

The genealogical record commences with the descendants of Japheth first, although he was the youngest son, whilst the record of the descendants of Shem, who was the eldest son, is given last. The sacred writer probably adopted this order here, so that he may pass immediately from the Shemites to the line of patriarchs who lead to Abraham.

THE JAPHETHITES :

GOMER, is the ancestor of the *Cimmerians* or *Cimmerii* dwelling chiefly in the Crimea, and around the Black and Caspian seas. According to Homer, they were a people dwelling "beyond the ocean streams," in a lonely land and gloomy cells, which the sun never visits with its cheering rays. (Odyss. 13-19.)

MAGOG, the ancestor of the *Scythians*, inhabiting the Caucasus and adjacent countries. The etymology of the name is

uncertain, though some writers give "great mountain" as the meaning of it. Ancient writers, who describe their exploits, speak of them as a barbarous, avaricious people. Compare also Ezekiel xxxviii. The king of Magog is generally called Gog, but in later times the name appears also as that of a nation, and is coupled with Magog. (See Revel. xx. 8.)

MADAI, the ancestor of the *Medes*. The name probably denotes *the middle*, because Media was supposed to be situated in the centre of Asia.

JAVAN, the ancestor of the *Ionians*. The Hebrews and most of the Asiatic nations applied the name *Ionians* to all the Greeks. (See Dan. viii. 21.)

TUBAL, the ancestor of the *Tibareni*, a people of Asia Minor, dwelling on the south-eastern shore of the Euxine. Tubal and Meshech are frequently mentioned together in the Old Testament as war-like nations. The prophet Ezekiel speaks of them as bringing copper and slaves to Tyre—Ch. xxvii. 13. Copper is found in great abundance in the mountains of northern Armenia.

MESHECH, the ancestor of a tribe inhabiting the Moschian mountains in Armenia and Cholchis. The prophet Ezekiel speaks of Meshech and Tubal as a war-like and barbarous people who "caused their terror in the land of the living." And the Psalmist compares those who had the misfortune to have taken up their abode among them. "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Meshech." (Ps. cxx. 5.)

TIRAS is not again mentioned in Scripture, but according to the Chaldee versions, Josephus, Hieronymus, and most modern commentators, he was the ancestor of the *Thraccians*. Though some few interpreters favour the opinion that the tribes near the river Tyras, (Dniester) are descended from him.

3. And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

ASHKENAZ, according to the Rabbis, was the ancestor of the Germans, and the modern Jews still call Germany by that name. This opinion is, however, altogether rejected by all Christian interpreters. As Ashkenaz is in Jer. li. 27, mentioned in connection with "the Kingdoms of Ararat and Minni," who were to form an alliance for the destruction of Babylon, many commentators are of opinion that the descendants of this patriarch dwelled near the Caspian sea. Josephus also remarks: "Ashkenaz founded the Aschanaxians, who are now called

by the Greeks, Rheginians," (Ant. i. vi. par. 1); and the ancient town of Rhagae is just one day's journey from the Caspian sea.

RIPHATH, in 1 Chron. i. 6, instead of רִיפַת (*Riphath*), we have the reading דִּיפַת (*Diphath*), the latter reading has no doubt originated through a mistake of the transcriber, who mistook the letter ר *r* for ד *d*. Many manuscripts, however, have also Riphath in Chronicles, and so the Septuagint and the Vulgate. The descendants of Riphath are generally supposed to have inhabited the Rhiphaean mountains. These mountains were regarded by the ancients as forming the extreme border of the earth, covered with eternal snow, having caverns from which issue the cold northern blasts.

TOGARMAH was, according to the most general opinion, the ancestor of a people inhabiting a province in Armenia. Indeed the Armenians themselves claim to be descended from Torgom. According to Ezek. xxvii. 14, "they of the house of Togarmah," traded in horses and mules. But, according to ch. xxxviii. 6, some of "the house of Togarmah" were also a warlike people.

4. *And the sons of Javan, Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.*

ELISHAH. The ancestor of the European Hellans, and of the inhabitants of the Greek islands. According to some interpreters he was only the ancestor of the inhabitants of the province of Elis, one of the divisions of the Peloponnesus, but in Ezek. xxvii. 7, "Elisha" is spoken of as islands from which purple stuff was brought to the market of Tyre. Ancient writers testify that on the coast of many of the Greek islands, the shell-fish, from the juice of which the valuable purple colours are obtained, are found in great abundance.

TARSHISH. His descendants emigrated into Spain and took up their abode in Tartessus, a tract of country situated between the two outlets of the river Guadalquivir, but in a more extensive sense embracing the whole district of Andalusia, and afterwards spread over the whole country. Tartessus abounded in silver, iron, tin, and lead. There is also found in this district a precious stone called Tarshish. The Phœnecians carried on a great commerce with Spain, from whence they imported gold and silver, &c. Hence we have mention made of אֲנִי תַרְשִׁישׁ (*Oni Tarshish*) "a fleet of Tarshish." (1 Kings x. 22; Is. ii. 16.) The great wealth of Tartessus passed into a proverb. (Strabo iii. 175.)

KITTIM. His descendants occupied the Island Cyprus, of which the most ancient town was Citium, and its inhabitants are by the Greek authors called *Kittwi*, which was, no doubt, adopted from the Hebrew name.

DODANIM. In many codices of the first Book of Chronicles, the reading דודנים (*Rodanim*) occurs, so also in the Samaritan version, and in the Septuagint it is rendered by *Rhodians*, hence many critics have supposed that the descendant of Dodanim inhabited the island of Rhodes. Other critics, however, regard the reading דודנים (*Dodanim*) as the correct one, and understood the *Daunii*, who formed the ancient population of Apulia a part of ancient Iapygia, in Italy.

5. *By these were the isles of the nations spread in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.*

In order to understand the full scope of the expression, "the isles of the nations" in our verse it is necessary to bear in mind that the Hebrews used the word אִיִּים (*iyim*) not only in reference to countries altogether surrounded by water, but also to countries adjacent to the sea, and seems to have been applied by the ancient Israelites to all countries which were so situated to them so as not to be reached unless by water. The expression may therefore be applied in a general sense to Europe. "The isles" here used metonymically for the inhabitants of isles. Sometimes in Scripture the country is put instead of the inhabitants.

THE HAMITES.

6. *And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.*

CUSH. From several passages of Scripture, it is evident that the descendants of Cush first settled in Arabia. Thus the river Gihon is said to compass "the whole land of Cush," which cannot possibly be "Ethiopia," as the English version has it. (Gen. ii. 13.) Zipporah, the wife of Moses, is called a Cushite, though she was a Midianitish woman of Arabia (compare Exod. ii. 21, Num. xii. 1.) Nimrod was a son of Cush (Gen. x. 8), and could not possibly be an African. (Compare Gen. x. 10.) From Arabia some of the descendants of Cush immigrated into Ethiopia. See more on the subject. Commentary, p. 91.

MIZRAIM. From him descended the Egyptians, whose physiognomy and bodily structure prove them to be descendants

of Ham. From their mummies, and pictorial representations it appears, however, that they were not all black, and to have curly hair, but resemble in their skull and facial outlines more the Caucasians, though darker in complexion.

PHUT is regarded by Josephus as the founder of the Libyans, and his opinion was adopted by Gesenius and other critics. Phut is, in the Septuagint, in most places also translated "Libyans." The word, according to some writers, denotes a *bow*; and the people were, probably, expert archers. This agrees with their military character in which they are represented in the Old Testament, "the Lybians, that handle and bend the bow." (Jer. xlv. 9.)

CANAAN. From him descended the Canaanites, and after him the country which they inhabited was also called Canaan. The meaning of the name כנען (*Canaan*) is, the *submissive one*, from כנע (*cana*) to stoop, to submit.

7. *The sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtechah. And the sons of Raamah: Sheba, and Dedan.*

SEBA, is the ancient name of the province Meroë in Ethiopia. The Sebeans were a mercantile people, and distinguished for their tall stature. (See Is. xlv. 14.) Seba was also the name of the royal city, and Josephus informs us, that Combyes called it Meroë after the name of his sister. (Antiq. ii. x. 2.) It was situated about ninety miles south of the junction of the Nile and Astaboras.

HAVILAH. From him are descended the Chaulotæi dwelling in Arabia near the Persian Gulf. Niebuhr, the renowned traveller, speaks of a town and district near that Gulf which are still called by the ancient name Havilah.

SABTAH. According to Josephus, his descendants inhabited the country near the river Astaboras (*Tacazze*), which forms the eastern river of the land Meroë.

RAAMAH, is generally accepted to be the town Regma (Ρέγμα) situated on the Persian gulf. The inhabitants are represented by the Prophet Ezekiel as bringing choice spices, gold, and precious stones to Tyre. (Ch. xxviii. 22.)

SABTECHA, was the founder of an Ethiopian tribe, but the precise country which they inhabited cannot now with any certainty be determined. The Ethiopian name *Subatok*, discovered on Egyptian monuments, bears a striking resemblance to the Hebrew name, and argues against the supposition of some writers who would place the abodes of the descendants of Sabtecha near the Persian gulf.

Raamah had two sons who became the founders of two important tribes, frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, namely:

SHEBA, who was the ancestor of the Sabæans inhabiting Arabia Felix, whose queen, on hearing of the great wisdom of Solomon came to Jerusalem "to prove him with hard questions." (1 Kings x. 1.) Their country abounded in spices, frankincense, gold, and precious stones. By extensive commerce with India, Egypt, and Syria, the Sabæans accumulated great riches. Their capital Sabas or Mariaba, situated on a lofty and beautiful wooded hill, was the most magnificent city in Arabia. Their palaces and temples were gigantic structures, the decorations and furniture, and according to some writers, even the domestic utensils of the citizens were of gold and silver. The natural production of Sheba, as well as the commerce carried on by its people, are often alluded to in Scripture, for instance, 1 Kings x. 10; Ps. lxxii. 15; Is. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22, xxxiii. 13; Job vi. 19; and the Bible statements are fully attested both by Arabian and Greek writers.

DEDAN. His descendants, like the Sabæans, were also commercial people. According to Jeremiah xlix. 7-8, they were immediate neighbours of the Idumæans, and according to Ezekiel xxv. 13, their territory extended between Theman and Dedan. Their trade seemed to have consisted chiefly in iron and ebony. (See Ezek. xxvii. 15.) Some writers maintain that the descendants of Dedan, inhabited the Island Daden in the Persian gulf; if so, they must have divided themselves and settled in two different regions. The Syrians call the island Daden by the name *Dirin*. Modern travellers have so far been unable to fix upon the precise island in the Persian gulf which once bore the name Daden.

8. *And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty man on the earth.*

9. *He was also a mighty hunter before the LORD: therefore it is said, Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.*

Nimrod, although not an ancestor of any nation or tribe like the other sons of Cush, yet by his own consummate boldness and valour he raised himself to power and dignity. "He began to be a mighty man," the Hebrew word גִּבּוֹר (*gibbor*) denotes a *valiant person*, a *strong or mighty man*, a *hero*. The Rabbinic writers, as well as many modern critics, derive the name נִמְרוֹד (*Nimrod*) from the root מָרַד (*marad*) to *rebel*, according

to this derivation the name would signify *we will rebel*. It is quite probable that this name was not given him by his parents, but was bestowed upon him afterwards on account of his daring acts. He probably first displayed his mighty strength and daring exploits in the chase, but gradually began to exercise his power also over men by acts of tyranny. And, indeed, in the Arabic Version גִּבּוֹר צַיִד (*gibbor tsayid*) is rendered by "a terrible tyrant," and in the Syriac Version, "a war-like giant."

The eminent German writer Herder, also speaks of him as "a trapper of men by stratagem and force." That Nimrod was not merely "a mighty hunter" in the chase, but also by bringing men under his power by high-handed and tyrannical means, seems also to be clearly indicated by the expression לִפְנֵי יְהוָה (*liphne Jehovah*), "before Jehovah," or more literally "in the face of Jehovah," that is, *in defiance of Jehovah*, implying that his acts were done without any fear of God and man. So in ch. xiii. 13, "the men of Sodom" are spoken of as "wicked and sinners before the Lord." We may observe too, that *hunting*, is, in other places, used in reference to the *persecuting of men*. Thus Jer. xvi. 16: "I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain." So again, Lam. iii. 52: "They have hunted me sore like a bird, that are mine enemies without cause."

10. *And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.*

The daring acts of Nimrod, no doubt, soon procured him many followers, just as we have many examples in modern history of daring persons having become the leaders of bands of bold adventurers. Finding the sandy desert too small for daring exploits, and the extension of his power, he wandered northward where he found Babel, (Babylon) and the other cities mentioned in our verse, which at that time most likely were but insignificant places. It will be seen, our text does not say, that Nimrod built those cities, but that they were "the beginning of his kingdom." He conquered the places, and made Babylon the seat of his government, hence Babylon was after-

* Many commentators and critics take the phrase לִפְנֵי יְהוָה (*liphne Jehovah*) in our passage as merely expressing a *superlative degree*, and refer in support to such passages as נִפְתָּלֵי אֱלֹהִים (*naphṭule Elohim*, lit. "wrestlings of God," i. e., "mighty wrestlings." Gen. xxx. 8,) עֵצֵי יְהוָה (*atse Jehovah*), lit. "the trees of Jehovah," i. e., "the finest trees." Ps. civ. 16.) אֲרָזֵי אֵל (*arze el*), lit. "the cedars of God," i. e., "the finest cedars." But the Hebrew student will at once perceive that these are not parallel expressions, and that the construction is quite different.

wards also called "the land of Nimrod." (Mic. v. 5, Eng. vers. v. 6.) Erech, according to Bachart, is identical with Arecca or Areca of the old geographers, situated on the Tigris, upon the borders of Babylonia and Susiana. But Rosenmüller thinks that Erech was nearer to Babylon, and this supposition is confirmed by Col. Taylor, the British resident at Bagdad, who is disposed to find the site of the ancient Erech "in the great mounds of primitive ruins, indifferently called Irak and Irka by the nomade Arabs. These mounds lie some miles east of the Euphrates, about midway between the site of Babylon and its junction with the Tigris." Accad, according to some ancient versions and interpreters, is Nesibis in Mesopotamia. Calneh, most interpreters identify this place with Canneh, mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 23; and Calno, mentioned in Is. x. 9; and according to the ancient versions and interpreters, it is Ctesiphon, situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite Seleucia. This supposition is favoured also by Ctesiphon being formerly called Chalonitis.

"In the land of Shinar." It is the country around Babylon. The overflowing of the two rivers made the country exceedingly fertile. The barley of the Babylonian plains is said to excel that of all other countries. The corn produces two and three hundred fold, the millet grows to a height almost incredible to Europeans, except to those who have seen it. The date-palms grow in abundance, and furnish excellent wine, and a nutritious bread. The climate is mild and salubrious. Even modern travellers bear testimony to the amazing fertility of the country. (See Kerr Porter ii. 259.) It was no doubt the great fertility of the country that induced Nimrod to take possession of it, and make it the basis from which to make further conquests.

11. *Out of that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth Ir, and Calah.*

12. *And Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.*

The ambition of the daring hunter was not yet satisfied, but having firmly established his kingdom at Babylon, he now sought to extend his dominion by further conquests, and invaded Ashur (Assyria). In this expedition he was also successful, as may be inferred from the brief statement in our passage; and in order to strengthen his hold upon the newly conquered country, he immediately set to work to build the four cities mentioned in our verses. Of these cities Nineveh was the only one which afterwards played an important part in the history of the ancient world. It was situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite to the spot of the present Mosul. In course of time Nineveh became of vast extent, it

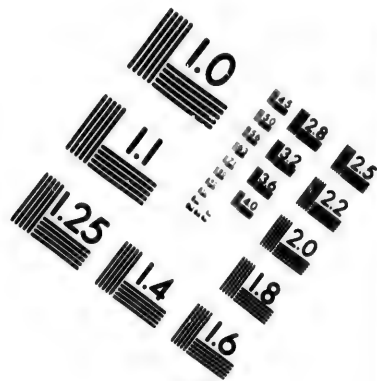
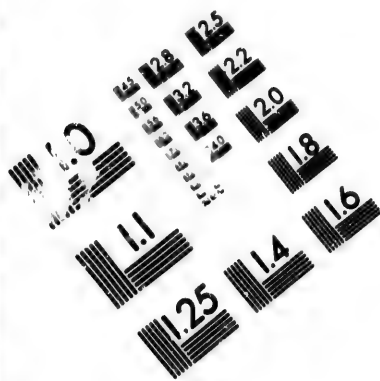
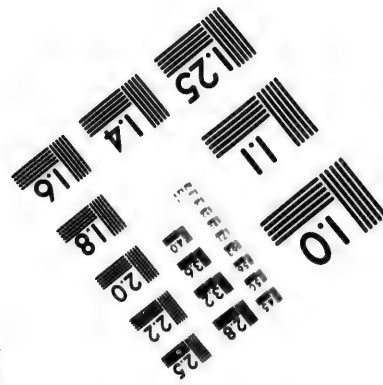
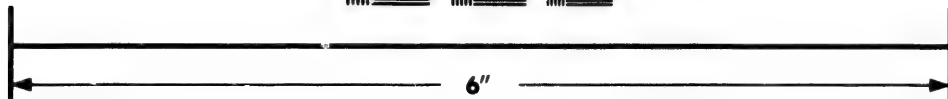
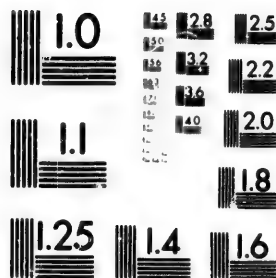


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was considered larger than Babylon, (Strabo xvi. 737) and in fact was the largest city in antiquity. (Diod. Sic. ii. 3.) The prophet Jonah speaks of it as a great city of three days' journey, (ch. iii. 3,) which contained more than 120,000 persons, "who could not distinguish their right hand from their left," that is, young children, (iv. 11.) This would imply a population of more than 600,000 inhabitants. According to Diodorus Siculus it was about twenty-one miles long, nine miles broad, and about sixty miles in circuit. It is certainly remarkable that the three days journey given by the prophet Jonah, should exactly correspond with the sixty miles given by the ancient historian. Its walls were a hundred feet high, and so broad that three chariots could drive abreast upon them. Its towers, of which there were fifteen hundred, were each two hundred feet high. It was a city of great magnificence. Its merchants, who formed the wealth of the city, are, by the prophet Nahum, hyperbolically said to be "more numerous than the stars." (Nahum iii. 16.) This prophet also foretells the destruction of Nineveh in such a vivid manner, as if he had been an eye-witness of the event. (ch. i-iii.) It was destroyed after a siege of several years by the united armies of the Medes under Cyaxares, and the Babylonians under Nabopolassar, about 625 B.C. When Herodotus, not quite 200 years afterwards, visited the spot there remained nothing of it but ruins. Nineveh was, by the Greek and Roman writers, called Ninus. Indeed, some writers have supposed that the name נִינְוֶה (*Nineveh*) is compounded of נִין (*Nin*) *Ninus* and נוֹה (*naveh*) a habitation, i.e., the habitation *Ninus*, and so called by Nimrod, after his son and successor Ninus.

We must not pass over unnoticed the rendering of verse 11 in the Authorized Version, "Out of that land went forth Ashur, and builded Nineveh." The meaning of the passage according to this rendering would be, that Ashur, the son of Shem, mentioned in verse 22, or one of his descendants who had already occupied the land of Shinar, not being able to resist the progress of Nimrod and his warriors, left the country, and went into Assyria where he built the cities mentioned, and thus founded the Assyrian empire. We may here at once observe, that the rendering of the Authorized Version is not only quite admissible, but is even more in conformity with the structure of the passage in the original, for it will be seen that in the rendering we have given, and which is also adopted in the Revised Version and by most modern interpreters, the preposition *into* must be supplied. The reason for rejecting the rendering of the Authorized Version is, that "Ashur is only mentioned in the 22nd verse; it would be perfectly

illogical to introduce him here together with Nimrod and thus mix up the Cushites with the Shemites; the land is called Ashur by anticipation." The ruins lately examined reveal also that Nimrod was the founder of Assyrian cities. Rabbi Shalom Haccohen, in his German *Jewish Version*, also gives the rendering which we have given. Luther, however, in his German Version; Rabbi Samson Hirsch, in his Commentary on Genesis; Rosenmüller, Von Bohlen, and many other interpreters, have given the same rendering as in the Authorized Version.

The localities of the other three cities cannot now be traced with any certainty. Rehoboth Ir. (Hebrew רְחוֹבוֹת עִיר *Rehoboth Ir. i. e., Streets of a City*) supposed to have been situated about four miles south-west of the town Myadin, on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, where there are extensive ruins which still bear the name of Rehoboth.

Calah is now commonly identified with the large mound *Kalah Sherghat*, which lies on the right bank of the Tigris, about fifty-five miles south of Mosul. This place at one time possessed a very extensive palace, and is several times mentioned on the black obelisk of the central palace of Nimroud, as the residence of the king. Resen (Hebrew רֶסֶן *Resen, i. e., a curb or bridle*, meaning probably a *strong fortress*) is by some writers identified with the extensive ruins of Nimroud, the Larissa of Xenophon. (*Anabasis*, iii. iv. 7, 9.) The fortifications of Larissa were so strong that the Persians were for a long time unable to take the town, but at last succeeded during a dense fog.

13. *And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim.*

14. *And Pathrusim, and Casluhim (out of whom came Philistim), and Caphtorim.*

LUDIM, according to some writers the Moorish tribes collectively. The Jerusalem Targum translates "Ludim," the inhabitants of the Mareotis, a part of Egypt. The prophet Isaiah (Is. lxvi. 19) speaks of them as accustomed to fight with the bow.

ANAMIM, supposed to have been an Egyptian tribe, and like the former extinct in Josephus's time.

LEHABIM, the Lybians. Instead of לְהָבִים (*Lehabim*), we have in 2 Chr. xii. 3; Neh. iii. 9; Dan. xi. 43, the form לְיָבִים (*Lubim*); we have already stated that proper names sometimes appear under different forms. These variations in the form of proper names, may have originated

from various causes, either through the carelessness of transcribers, or from colloquial mode of pronunciation, or from the easy interchange of certain letters in the language. In the Authorized Version in the two first mentioned passages, the word is rendered by Lubims, and in the last passage by Lybians.

NAPHTUHIM, the inhabitants of the Lybian town Napata. This town was once the capital of an Ethiopian Kingdom, and was one of the most magnificent and richest towns of Africa.

PATHRUSIM, are no doubt the people of Upper Egypt or Thebais, פתרוס (*Pathros*), is an Egyptian name, signifying *the southern country*.

CASLUHIM, according to Bochart and other writers, the Chelchians, who, according to the Greek writers, descended from the Egyptians. (Herod. ii. 104; Diod. i. 28, 55, &c.) "Out of whom came the Philistim," i. e., from the Casluhim sprung the Philistines. According to Jer. xlvii. 4, and Amos ix. 7, the Philistines were emigrants from Caphtor, and hence many writers suppose that the phrase, "out of whom came the Philistim," has been transposed by mistake, and should come after "Caphthorim," next mentioned in our text. There is, however, no necessity for supposing any such misplacement of the passage. A portion of the Philistines may originally have been settlers from the Casluhim, but the nation was afterwards increased by a colony from Caphtor joining them. The term פלשתים (*Pelishtim*), *Philistines*, denotes emigrants from the Ethiopic, פלש (*palash*), to *emigrate*. In the Septuagint called Ἀλλόφυλοι *wanderers*. They dwelt on the coast of the Mediterranean, to the south of Judea, from Ekron towards the Egyptian frontier, bordering principally on the tribes of Dan, Simeon, and Judah.

CAPHTORIM. Critics are by no means agreed as to the identity of the Caphtorim. Some writers, upon the authority of several ancient versions, understand the Cappadocians; but by far the larger number of interpreters take the term to denote the Cretans. This supposition is favoured by the Philistines being sometimes called כרתים (*Cherethim*) "Cherethites," as 1 Sam. xxx. 14; Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. ii. 5, where the Septuagint and the Syriac Versions render Cretans. In those passages *Cherethim* seems to be synonymously used with the Philistines.

15. *And Canaan begat Sidon his first born, and Heth,*
16. *And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite,*
17. *And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,*
18. *And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite ; and afterwards were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.*

From the sons of Canaan, given in the above verses, sprung the different tribes or nations who first peopled the land of Canaan. The country was about 145 miles in length, by forty-five in average width, an area less than that of Wales. It comprised the southern portion of Syria, and bounded on the west by the Mediterranean, east by the valley of the Jordan, north by the mountain ranges of the Lebanon, and the glen of the Litany (Leontes) and south by the desert of Sinai.

ZIDON or SIDON, Heb. צִידוֹן (*Zidon*), the first born of Canaan,

from whom descended the Phœnicians. Josephus states that Sidon built a city of the same name, and throughout the Old Testament "Sidon" occurs as the oldest capital of the Phœnicians. Joshua calls it צִידוֹן רַבָּה (*Zidon Rabbah*) "great Zidon." (Jos. xi. 8.) Indeed, both Biblical and profane writers often apply the name Sidon to Phœnicia and call its inhabitants Sidonians.* (See Deut. iii. 9; Ezek. xxxii. 30; Strabo i. 40; Virg. *Æn.* i. 677.) Many writers maintain that "Zidon" denotes a fishery, and that it was so called from the favourite pursuit of the ancient Sidonians, but Josephus is no doubt correct in asserting that it was so called after its founder. The Greeks called the country Φοινίκη, *Phœnicia*, either after a brother of Cadmus, or from ποῦρος a famous purple dye which formed one of the principle articles of commerce.

HETH, Heb. חֶת (*Cheth*). From him sprung the Hittites, who dwelled in the southern part of Palestine, around Hebron and Beersheba. They spread, however, into several other districts, and this will account for "the land of the Hittites" being used for Canaan. (Josh. i. 4.)

THE JEBUSITE. From him sprung the Jebusites who dwelled principally around Jerusalem, though some of them also took up their abode in the mountains of Judah. Jerusalem formerly bore the name Jebus, no doubt after

*On the coins of Zidon the inscription לְצִידוֹן (le^{zidonim} le^{zidon}) i.e., of Zidon of the Zulonians. But later there evidently sprung up a rivalry between Zidon and Tyre, for on the Tyrian coins there is the inscription לְצִיר אִם צִידוֹן i.e., Tyre the mother (metropolis) of the Zidonians.

its founder. Although Joshua defeated the Jebusites, they still retained possession of their city Jebus. It was afterwards attacked by the tribe of Judah but without success, and at a later period by the Benjamites, but with no better results. It was, however, afterwards conquered by the valour and perseverance of David.

THE AMORITE. Of all the tribes of Canaan, the Amorite formed the most powerful. They had their abode in the mountains of Judah, and also between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok. Moses deprived them of their transjordanic possessions, which were apportioned to Reuben, Gad, and to a part of Manasseh, and they were finally made tributary by Solomon.

Girgasite, the abode of the Girgasites, cannot be established with any certainty. According to Matt. viii. 28, they dwelled in the east of Tiberias, for it is there stated, "And when he was come to the other side into the country of Gergesenes;" but according to Mark v. 1, and Luke viii. 26, it is "into the country of the Gadarenes." Origen indeed says, that the city of Gergesa anciently stood on the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias, and the precipice is still shown down which the swine rushed. (Opp. iv. p. 140), but as this tradition is not confirmed by any other testimony, no importance is attached to it. It is commonly supposed that the reading Γεργεσηνῶν "Gergesenes," in Matthew, is dubious; and, indeed, the Syriac Version has there also (*leathro degodroye*) "into the land of the Gadarenes." According to some of the Rabbis, the Girgasites emigrated into Africa, fearing the power of God; and the ancient historian Procopius, who flourished about the beginning of the sixth century, says, that in the ancient city of Tingis (Tangiers) there are two pillars of white stone near a large fountain inscribed in Phœnician characters, "We are the people preserved by flight from that robber Jesus (Joshua) the son of Nave, who pursued us."

THE HIVITE. The Hivites dwelled at the foot of Hermon and Lebanon.

THE ARKITE. The Arkites inhabited, according to Josephus, the city Arca or Arce, a Phœnician town at the north-western foot of the Lebanon. The ruins of the town are still extant at Tel Arka. There are also some coins in existence with the inscription לֶאֱרָא מֶלֶךְ (*learak melech*) *King of Arak*. (Rosenm. Alterth, ii. 1, s. 10.) It was a flourishing town in the time of Alexander the Great, to whom a temple was here erected.

THE SINITE. The Sinites were marauders who infested Mount Lebanon. They had a strong fortress called Sinnas in the neighbourhood of Arca. (Compare Strabo, xv. 755).

THE ARVADITE. The Arvadites inhabited the small island Aradus, on the northern coast of Phœnicia. The prophet Ezekiel, speaks of the Arvadites as experienced mariners and brave soldiers, rendering great service to Tyre. (Ch. xxvii, 8, 11.)

THE ZEMARITE. The Zemarites are the inhabitants of the town Simyra, mentioned by ancient geographers. It was situated at the western foot of Lebanon. There are still ruins there called *Sumrah*.

THE HAMATHITE. The Hamathites had their abode in the Syrian town Hamath, by the Greeks and Romans called *Epiphania*. It was situated on the river Arontes. It is still one of the most prosperous towns of Syria, having a large population. The upper part of the town is supplied with water from the river, which is raised by immense Persian wheels about eighty feet in diameter.

19. *And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou goest* towards Gerar unto Gaza; as thou goest towards Sodem, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, to Lasha.*

The descendants of Canaan spread themselves over the extensive tract of country extending from Sidon in the north down to Gerar and Gaza in the south, and to the Dead Sea and the Jordan in the east. Gerar was a Canaanitish border town between Kadish and Shur, it was situated in a valley called "the valley of Gerar." (Gen. xxvi. 17.) In the time of Abraham it was the seat of a Philistine king. (Gen. xxvi. 1.) Gaza, Heb. עֲזָזָה (*Azzah*) *the strong one*; the most southern town of the Philistines, and as the name imports, it was a strong fortress, situated on a lofty mound. In the time of the Judges it was conquered by the men of Judah (Judg. i. 18), but soon afterwards regained its independence again. The place was surrounded by exceedingly massive walls, and was only taken by Alexander the Great after a five months siege. He had erected battering engines on an artificial mound 250 feet high, and a quarter of a mile in width.

LASHA, (Heb. לֶשֶׁת (*Lesha*.) is, according to several ancient translators and Jerome, *Callirrhoe*, celebrated for its hot sulphurous springs, situated on the eastern coast of the Dead Sea. We shall have again to refer to these hot springs. The other places mentioned in our verse will be noticed hereafter.

*בָּאֵךְ (*boachah*) instead of בָּאֵךְ (*boacha*) and more fully עַד בָּאֵךְ (*ad boacha*) ch. xix, 22, literally, *thy coming*, i. e., "as thou comest" or "goest," is an idiomatic expression, denoting in the direction towards, as in our verse "from Sidon in the direction towards Gerar."

DESCENDANTS OF SHEM.

21. *To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, were children born.*

"The father of all the children of Eber." There are two different reasons assigned by commentators, why Shem is spoken of as "the father of all the children of Eber." Some explain, "because two important nations sprung from Eber through his two sons Peleg and Joktan — namely, the *Hebrews* and *Arabians*." But as it is not easily seen why Shem should be exclusively called the father of the children of his great grandson Eber, other commentators understood by the phrase עֶבֶר (*bene Eber*) *Hebrews*, so called from their passing over the Euphrates in coming from the east to the land of Canaan; taking עֶבֶר (*eber*), not as a proper name, but as an appellation applied to the Hebrew nation, derived from the root עָבַר (*avar*) to pass over, and hence called עִבְרִים (*Ivrim*) *Hebrews*; i. e., those who come from the other side of the Euphrates. And so the celebrated commentator Rashi translates "children of the other side." Parkhurst renders "children of pilgrimage." The term was first applied to Abraham, who in Ch. xiv. 13, is called עִבְרִי (*Ivri*), "the Hebrew," and afterwards to his descendants. It is quite probable that when they first came into the land of Canaan, they may have been asked as to their former abode, and having stated that they were עִבְרִים (*Ivrim*) *Hebrews*, i. e., emigrants from beyond the Euphrates, they were afterwards called by that name among their neighbours, whilst they called themselves Israelites.

22. *The children of Shem are: Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.*

ELAM. From him descended the Elymæans who inhabited the province Elymais. In Ch. xiv. i. Chedorlaomer is mentioned as the king of Elam. The Elymæans, however, include also the Persians, who were likewise descended from Elam. Shushan (Susa) the ancient capital of Persia was situated in the province of Elam. (See Dan. viii. 2.)

ASSHUR. From him sprung the Assyrians.

ARPHAXAD, From him descended a people inhabiting the northern district of Assyria (*Arrhaphachitis*).

LUD, He was the ancestor of the Lydians of Asia Minor.

ARAM. From him sprung the Aramæans of Syria and Mesopotamia.

23. *And the children of Aram, Uz, and Hull, and Gether. and Mash.*

UZ. His descendants inhabited a district in the northern part of Arabia Deserta, between the territory of the Idumeans and the Euphrates. The land of Uz is specially noted in Scripture for its having been the scene of Job's trial.

HULL, the dwelling place of the descendants of Hull, cannot now with any certainty be ascertained. Some writers identify them with the inhabitants of Cœlo-Syria, others suppose that they dwelled in the neighbourhood of Uz.

GETHER. A similar uncertainty prevails as regards the dwelling place of the descendants of Gether.

MASH. His descendants are supposed to have had their abode in part of the mountain chain Mons Masius, north of Nisibis, which divides Armenia from Mesopotamia.

24. *And Arphaxad begat Salah, and Salah begat Eber.*

EBER, the progenitor of the Hebrews.

25. *And to Eber were born two sons; the name of one was Peleg, for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.*

PELEG. The name פֶּלֶג (*Peleg*) denotes *division*, and was bestowed, as our verse informs us, in commemoration of the dispersion of the nations which took place in his days. By the expression "in his days was the earth divided," some commentators have erroneously supposed that some actual disruption of the earth had taken place in his days, but the expression simply means that a dispersion of the nations of the earth had taken place; *the earth* being, by synecdoche employed for the *inhabitants* of the earth or of a land. The descendants of Peleg dwelled in Mesopotamia, while the Joktides emigrated into Southern Arabia. Joktan is by the Arabians called Kachtan, and is by them regarded as the father of the genuine Arabians. And modern travellers inform us that about three days' journey north of Nedsheran are a province and a town called *Kachtan*. The sons of Joktan, thirteen in number, are contained in verses 26-29, they were progenitors of Arabian tribes, some of which have only so far been identified, whilst others have either not yet been discovered, or have become altogether extinct.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.*

"And of one speech;" in the original it is שֵׁשׁ אֶחָד וּדְבָרִים אחריים (Saphah echath udevarim achadim) "of one lip, and of one kind of words," which is more to the point than the rendering in our version from which it might be inferred that there may have existed different dialects of that language, but which the original altogether precludes. The question as to which language was the one here spoken of, does not in any way affect the authenticity of the books of Moses, as it is not for a moment disputed that the Hebrew was the language of the chosen people from the time of Abraham; and that Moses wrote in that language, in which it pleased God also to convey His will and commandments, and hence the language was in later times also called לשון הקדוש (lashon hakkadosh) i.e., the sacred language. In the History of Hebrew Literature. (Vol. 1, p. 3 *et seq.*) I have, however, conclusively shown that the proper names in the family of Adam are purely Hebrew words. Further, there are but few of the proper names which are mentioned up to the building of the tower of Babylon, of which the derivation cannot now be traced from a Hebrew root. There are, indeed, a few proper names of which the root has become obsolete, but the same is likewise the case with words in the later books of the Old Testament, as every Hebrew scholar well knows. Again, Adam in bestowing the names on the different creatures, would naturally be guided by some peculiarity that he had observed, and give such a name which would at once express the peculiarity; this I have shown was actually the case. (See p. 13.) Bochart and many other writers strenuously maintain that the names of the animals and birds mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures are the very same which Adam bestowed upon them, and that these, for the most part, are significant. Josephus says: "God brought to Adam the several species of animals, exhibiting them to him, male and female, and He imposed upon them names by which they are even now called." This circumstance, then, likewise points to the Hebrew being the primitive language. But further, I have clearly shown, that when we examine the peculiarities of the Hebrew language, we find many unmistakable indications of infancy, such as might naturally be looked for in the language employed in the childhood of the human race. (See p. 14, *et seq.*) Indeed, the childlike simplicity of the Hebrew language, very frequently

renders translation very difficult. There is another very remarkable circumstance which strongly argues in favour of the Hebrew being the primitive language spoken of in our verse, and that is, that the lives of *four persons form a link from the creation across the flood down to a part of the life of Abraham*. Adam lived 930 years, when he was 587 years old Methuselah was born, so that this antediluvian patriarch lived 243 years during the life of Adam, and we may reasonably suppose that he conversed with him and spoke the same language. Methuselah died in the year of the flood, 1656 A.M., but 100 years before that event, 1556 A.M., Shem was born, so that this patriarch lived 100 years during the lifetime of Methuselah. Shem lived after the flood 500 years, he died according to the Hebrew text, 2156 A.M., and Abraham was born 1946 A.M. according to the same text, so that Shem lived upwards of a century during the lifetime of Abraham. A writer has, therefore, well remarked: "Thus Methuselah stood before the flood, God's great historic ledger, reaching one hand back to Adam, receiving the record of events from him, and with the other reaching forward and handing it down to Shem. Then Shem, living on both sides of the flood reaches back and takes the record from Methuselah and hands it down to faithful Abraham, who teaches it to his children." A few writers have brought forward the Sanscrit as a rival to the Hebrew, but I have shown that the structure of the Sanscrit is altogether too perfect, and we may add, too artificial for a primitive language. (See more on the subject, *History of Hebrew Literature*, p. 17 *et seq.*)

2. *And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.*

"As they journeyed," lit. *בְּנִסְעָם* (*benuseam*), in their breaking up or removing; generally spoken of as nomadic encampments striking their tents and removing from place to place with their flocks. "From the east," which has somewhat perplexed commentators in their endeavours to find a satisfactory explanation; for if this migration was from the Armenian province where the ark had landed into the land of Shinar, they must have come from the north and moved southward. But *מִקְדֶּם* (*mikkedem*), admits of being rendered "in the east," which rendering is also given in the Revised Version in the margin, by Kalisch and other interpreters. The meaning accordingly is, when they had migrated from their former habitation in Armenia, into the land of Shinar; i. e., (lower Mesopotamia or Babylonia,) in their journeying about in that land, which viewed from Palestine or Arabia, took place "in the east."

"They found a plain and dwelt there." The "plain" here spoken of, was the extensive plain about Babylon, called by Herodotus, *μεῖον μέγα*, *great plain*.

3. *And they said one to another, 'Come and let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and bitumen had they for mortar.*

We have in this verse a most faithful account of the materials employed in the construction of Babylonian buildings, which consisted either of sun-dried or burnt bricks of a fine clay, and bitumen or asphalt, which abounds in the neighbourhood of Babylon, and which for excellence is unequalled in any other part of the globe. Mr. Keppel says, "The soil of ancient Assyria and Babylon consists of fine clay mixed with sand, with which, as the waters of the river retire, the shores are covered. This compost when dried by the heat of the sun, becomes a hard and solid mass, and forms the finest materials for the beautiful bricks for which Babylon was so celebrated. We all put to the test the adaptation of the mud for pottery, by taking some of it while wet and then moulding it into any form we pleased. Having been exposed to the sun for half an hour, it became as hard as stone." (*Trav. in the East*, p. 73.) Thus the soil supplied in abundance the want of stone, as there existed no stone quarries throughout the whole region of Babylon. Layard, in speaking of the ruins of Birs-Nimrod, remarks: "That the cement by which the bricks were united, is of so tenacious a quality, that it is almost impossible to detach one from the mass entire." (*Layard, Nin. and Babyl.* p. 499.)

4. *And they said,* Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us† a name, lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.*

"Whose top may reach unto heaven," is simply a hyperbolic expression, denoting *an exceedingly high tower*. A similar figure occurs in Deut. i. 28: "The cities are great and fenced up to heaven." So also Daniel iv. 8 (Eng. Ver. v. 11) spoken of a tree whose height "reached unto heaven." It can however, be scarcely doubted, but that the well known heathen myth of giants attempting to storm the heavens, owes its origin

* *הבה* (*havaah*), is the imperative with *ה* paragogic, from *יָהוּב* (*yahav*), to give, and is used as a hortatory interjection to incite to action, like the English *come!* the German *wohlan*, and the French *allons*. In the English Version it is rendered by "go to."

† The word *שֵׁם* (*shem*) name, is sometimes used in the sense of *fame* or *glory*. See for example 2 Sam. vii. 23, viii. 13; 1a. lxxiii. 2.

to some distorted tradition of the building of the tower of Babylon. "And let us make a name." This passage at once affords the information as to the real motive of the gigantic undertaking. It was an immoderate longing for worldly fame and greatness. The tower was designed for a lasting monument of their power, and the mighty deeds they were able to achieve, and not, as Josephus and some other writers have supposed, "to guard against a future flood." "Lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth," this declaration, which stands in close connection with "let us make a name," shows that the fame which they would acquire by the undertaking, was also intended to inspire with fear, and thus not only serve to shield them from attacks of foes, but would enable them also the more readily to extend their own power. There are some who suppose that this event may probably have taken place during the life time of Nimrod, and Josephus indeed distinctly declares that it was Nimrod who incited the people, and declared that "he would be avenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to reach." (Ant. i. ch. iv. par. 2). The language of our text, however, clearly implies that the daring enterprise was not set on foot by one person, but was the mutual undertaking of many. The statement of Josephus was no doubt derived from some ancient tradition upon which no reliance can be placed.

5. *And the LORD came down to see the city and tower, which the children of men built.*

"And the LORD came down to see." I need hardly tell the reader that this is merely an anthropomorphic expression, simply implying that God took cognizance of the impious undertaking of these arrogant people. God is omnipresent, and nothing is hidden from His sight. "Which the sons of man בְּנֵי אָדָם (*banu*) have built," that is, have begun to build and finished to a certain point. By בְּנֵי אָדָם (*bene Adam*) "children of men" must here be understood of those who had degenerated from the piety of their ancestors, for it cannot for a moment be supposed that the race of Shem took any part in the impious undertaking.

6. *And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they purpose to do.*

"And this they begin to do," the literal rendering of the original is, "and this is *their beginning to do," that is, this is

הַחִלָּה (*hachillam*) "their beginning" infinitive *Hiphil*, used substantively, from חָלַל (*chalal*) to begin.

only the beginning of their arrogant deeds, and if not prevented from accomplishing it, nothing hereafter will deter them from anything they purpose to do, no matter how audacious or how great or hard the undertaking. Although they well knew that in course of time they could not possibly avert their being spread abroad, as the natural result of the increase of population, still, they no doubt designed by the building of the city and tower to centralize their power, and as much as possible preserve their unity, in order that by their combined action they might render themselves more powerful. Such a power in the hands of an impious, proud, and audacious people would have led to the most fearful consequences. But God

"Frustrates the devices of the crafty,
So that their hands cannot perform anything real, (or of worth)."

—Job v. 12.

He confused their language, which at once obliged them to divide up into separate communities.

7. *Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand *one another's speech.*

"Come, let us go down." The use of the plural pronoun "us," has been explained in different ways. Not a few writers have regarded it as addressed to the angels surrounding the throne of God. (See Isaiah vi. 1. 2.) The Patristic writers explained it as indicative of the Trinity, whilst most modern interpreters, both orthodox and heterodox, simply regard it as a *pluralis majestaticus*, similar to the use of the plural pronouns by royal personages. In my remarks on "Let us make man in our image," (Gen i. 26). I have explained it as God taking counsel with Himself before He entered upon the act of the creation of man, for the very idea of taking counsel in itself presupposes importance, and it is undoubtedly the importance of the event that the inspired writer wishes to convey by the statement, and this I consider to be the import of the statement "let us go down," in our own verse. The inspired writer represents God as taking counsel with Himself before He entered upon the act of confounding the language, to mark in a forcible manner the importance of the event. The use of the plural pronoun might therefore be appropriately called, *the plural of deliberation*.

* "They may not understand," in the original it is לֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ (lo ish'meu) "they might not hear." The verb שָׁמַע (shama) to hear, is often used in the sense to understand. Thus, for example, Gen. xlii. 23, "For they know not that Joseph שָׁמַע (shomea) understood (lit, heard) them." So sometimes the Greek verb ἀκούω to hear. See John vi. 60. 1 Cor. xiv. 2.

8. *So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city.*

"And they left off to build the city;" although there is no direct mention made that the building of the tower likewise ceased, yet it is evidently implied, since the building of the city and tower are previously spoken of as one undertaking. According to an ancient tradition, God's intervention on this occasion was attended by a tempest, thunder, and lightning, and that the lightning, or according to the Arabians, a fire from heaven, destroyed the upper part of the tower. Upwards of 4,100 years, according to Calmet's chronology, or 4,400 years, according to Hale's computation, have passed away since the building of the tower of Babylon took place, and although there remains nothing more of that once magnificent city and far-famed temple of the Seven Spheres, than mouldering ruins, and shapeless heaps of rubbish, yet there are strong reasons to believe that even in these ruins there is still preserved at least a portion of the tower of Babylon. About forty miles south-west of Bagdad on the banks of the Euphrates is situated the modern town of Hillah, this town is surrounded in almost all directions by ruins, and shapeless heaps of rubbish, among which some wild animals and birds have taken up their abode, and whose dismal cries now and then break the profound silence that pervades the hideous waste. These ruins, reader, mark the site once occupied by Babylon the Great, and testify to the literal fulfilment of the fearful denouncement uttered against it by the prophet Isaiah:

"I will also make it a possession for the porcupine and pools of water;
And I will sweep it with the besom of destruction said the LORD of hosts."
(Ch. xiv. 23.)

About six miles south-west of Hillah, at a place now called Birs Nimroud (*Nimrod's fort*), but by the Jews of the country the prison of Nebuchadnezzar, "lies a group of ruins peculiarly prominent by its colossal height and extent, standing on the edge of the vast marsh formed by the Hindiyah canal, and the inundation of the Euphrates, a dreary pile, unrelieved by a blade of grass, or a single herb. The huge heap, in which bricks, stone, marble, and basalt are irregularly mixed, covers a square-superficies of 40,000 feet; whilst the chief mount is nearly 300 feet high, and from 200 to 400 feet in width, commanding the extensive view over a country of utter desolation. These are the remains of the far-famed "Temple of the Seven Spheres," most probably the "Temple of Jupiter Belus" of the classical writers, and the "Tower of Babel" of our text. It consisted of seven distinct stages or square platforms, built of kiln-burnt bricks, each about twenty feet high, gradually

diminishing in diameter, and forming an oblique pyramid." (Kalisch Com. on Gen. p. 315. See also Loftus, *Chaldæ and Susiana* p. 31.) Mr. Rich, who carried on some excavation in the place, observes, "Birs Nimroud, is a mound of an oblong form, the total circumference of which is 762 yards. At the eastern side it is cloven by a deep furrow, and is not more than 50 or 60 feet high: but on the western side it rises in a conical figure to the elevation of 198 feet, and on its summit is a solid pile of brick, 27 by 28 feet in breadth, diminishing in thickness to the top, which is broken and irregular, and rent by a large fissure extending through a third of its height. The fire-burnt bricks have inscriptions on them, and so excellent is the cement that it is nearly impossible to extract one whole. The other parts of the summits of this hill are occupied by immense fragments of brick-work of no determinate figure, tumbled together, and converted into solid vitrified masses, as if they had undergone the action of the fiercest fire." The eminent traveller Ker Porter, who also gives a description of the place, says that he has no doubt that the solid vitrified masses of brickwork were the effect of fire acting from above, and that it was probably lightning. This circumstance certainly accords with the ancient tradition we have mentioned, that the tower of Babel was overthrown by a fire from heaven, or by lightning. The renowned travellers Niebuhr, Sir Ker Porter, and many other travellers, and also many commentators, concur with the traditions of the country in fixing upon Birs Nimroud as the probable site of the tower of Babylon.

9. *Therefore is its name called Babel; for there the LORD founded the language of all the earth; and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.*

"Therefore is its name called Babel," the Hebrew name בבל (*Babel*) denotes *confusion*, and is, therefore a memorial name commemorative of the confusion of languages.

Modern linguistic researches have now almost beyond a doubt, established the theory of one primitive Asiatic language. This theory coincides with the statement of the sacred writer as recorded in the first verse of this chapter. But besides this, there are several ancient profane writers who also bear testimony to the building of a tower and the consequent confusion of language. Josephus quotes from one of the Sibylline oracles as follows: "When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower, as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven; but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave every one his peculiar language and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon," (*Ant. I., ch. iv., par. 3.*) Eusebius in his *Præparatio Evangel-*

ica quotes Abydene, the celebrated author of the history of the Chaldeans and the Assyrians, as follows: "There are those who relate that the first men born on the earth (giants), when they grew proud of their strength and stature, supposing that they were more excellent than the gods, wickedly attempted to build a tower where Babylon stands. But as the work advanced towards heaven, it was overthrown by the gods with the assistance of the winds, and the ruins were called Babylon. Up to that time men were of one language; but then the gods sent among them diversity of tongues." Eupolemus, as quoted by *Alexander Polyhistor, affirms, "That the city of Babylon was first built by giants; that they built the most famous tower in all history; and that the tower was destroyed by the almighty power of God, and the giants dispersed over the face of the whole earth." Mr. Oppert thinks that he has found allusions to the deluge and the confusion of languages on a cylinder discovered at Birs Nimroud, and he regards the circumstance as an additional proof of the identity of Birs Nimroud and the Tower of Babylon.

The remaining verses of the chapter contain the genealogy of Shem, which is an immediate continuation of the genealogical record of Adam in ch. v. It is a remarkable coincident that both contain ten generations, and that each ends with the pious patriarch chosen by God to propagate and to glorify His name, the one ending with Noah and the other with Abram. We will here subjoin a chronological table of the ten generations between Noah and Abram, and from it will be perceived that the Samaritan codex and the Septuagint again differ from the Hebrew text, of which they are no doubt corruptions.

PATRIARCHS.	HEBREW TEXT.			SAMARITAN CODEX.			SEPTUAGINT.		
	Years before birth of first son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.	Years before birth of first son	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.	Years before birth of first son	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.
Shem.....	100	500	600	100	500	600	100	500	600
Arphaxad.....	35	403	438	135	303	438	135	400	535
Kaivan.....	*	*	*	*	*	*	130	330	460
Salah.....	30	403	433	130	403	433	130	330	460
Eber.....	34	430	464	134	270	404	134	270	404
Peleg.....	30	209	239	130	109	239	130	209	339
Reu.....	32	207	239	132	107	239	132	207	339
Serug.....	30	200	230	130	100	230	130	200	330
Nahor.....	29	119	148	79	69	148	179	125	304
Terah.....	70	(135)	205	70	(75)	145	70	(135)	205

*Alexander Polyhistor was born at Miletum 85 years before the Christian era. He wrote 42 treatises of grammar, of philosophy, and of history, of which, however, only some fragments have come down to us.

The reader will perceive from the above table that the Septuagint inserts between Arphaxad and Salah the name of "Cainan" who, according to ch. v. 9, was the son of Enos. According to the Septuagint this *second* Cainan was the son of Arphaxad, and Salah was the son of Cainan, whereas according to the Hebrew text Salah was the son of Arphaxad. The same person is also introduced in Luke iii. 36, but in 1 Chron. i. 18, 24, the name Cainan does not occur in Shem's line to Abraham, and the most eminent chronologists perfectly agree that the name in that line is spurious. The Septuagint most likely introduced the name in order to complete *the ten* generations from Shem to Terah, whereas *the ten* generations are intended to extend from Shem to Abraham. The Hebrew text is faithfully adhered to in the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic versions, as well as by other ancient translations. It will also be seen from the table that the Septuagint gives to Cainan precisely the same age at the birth of the first son, and the same extent of life as it gives to Salah.

The table of the patriarchs after the flood presents to us a remarkable difference in the duration of life as compared with the duration of life before the flood. Noah reached the age of 950 years, whilst his son Shem, who was born before the flood but lived the greater portion of his life after it, attained only to the age of 600 years. His son Arphaxad, born two years after the flood, only reached the age of 438 years; Peleg 209; Nahor 148; Terah 205 years. This shortening of human life may reasonably be ascribed to two primary causes, namely, the climatic changes produced by the flood, and the change of habits and mode of life. With the shortening of human life, we learn from our table also that children were born at a proportionally earlier age of the parents. In the genealogical table from Adam to Noah the age of 65 years is the earliest at which the first son is born, but according to our table only Shem was 100 years old at the birth of his first son, but Arphaxad only thirty-five, Salah thirty, Eber thirty-four, and so on to Terah, whose first son was born when he was seventy years old.

27. *Now these are the generation of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.*

28. *And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.*

"In Ur of the Chaldees." All the Jewish writers identify Ur with the modern town *Uruk*, called by the Greeks *Edessa*. This is also the local opinion of the natives, and the principal mosque in the place is called "The Mosque of Abraham," and

the pond in the court, in which the sacred fish are kept, is called "The Lake of Abraham the Beloved" (Niebuhr *Voyage en Arabic*, p. 330). But most modern critics identify Ur with Mugheir (mother of bitumen), which is said to be one of the most, if not the most, ancient city of the Chaldeans hitherto discovered. It lies on the right bank of the Euphrates, about six miles distant from the river. A few commentators take Ur as the name of a district and not of a city, but this view has not found much favor. In the cuniform inscriptions the form *Hur* occurs instead of Ur. The name אור (*Ur*) signifies *light* or *fire*, and may probably be connected with the fire-worship so commonly practiced by the Chaldeans, Persians, and other eastern people. Indeed, there is a tradition that when Abram refused to worship fire, Nimrod, or some other Chaldean tyrant caused him to be cast into a fiery furnace, from which God delivered him.

29. *And Abram and Nahor took wives to themselves; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.*

The name אור (*Sarai*) is no doubt derived from סרה to *combat, to contend*, and hence denotes one contending or struggling with her ill fate, such as barrenness, which, as the reader is well aware, was considered by the ancient Jews as a great reproach. In chapter xvii. 15, 16, when Abraham received the promise, that she should become "*a mother of nations*," God commands him to change her name to סרה (*Sarah*), denoting *a princess*, that is *a princess "of many nations."* I have already remarked that the parents, in giving such significant or prophetic names, as they may be called, seemed to have been secretly guided to do so. Sarai was, according to ch. xx. 12, Abraham's half sister, and Nahor married his niece. It is quite evident that before the Mosaic laws were promulgated, the laws of affinity and consanguinity were not strictly observed, if observed at all. According to Exod. vi. 20, Amram, the father of Aaron and Moses, took Jochebed, his father's sister, to wife. The patriarch Jacob had two sisters simultaneously as wives. It is true that this was brought about by the deception practiced upon him by Laban, still we cannot for a moment suppose that, however deeply he may have felt the fraud practiced upon him, he would never have consented to marry the sister also, had such an alliance been deemed sinful in his eyes. It is, therefore, apparent that whatever natural disinclination may have existed among the ancient Hebrews in contracting marriages with such near relatives, they were at least not looked upon as sinful, or the sacred writer in recording them would certainly not have passed them over

without uttering one word of censure against them. As no matrimonial laws then existed, and as the Hebrews were at that time a nomadic people, wandering from place to place with their flocks, and, therefore, were necessarily cut up in small communities, we can easily understand how marriages such as those above mentioned should have taken place, especially when we take into consideration the great disinclination that existed in contracting alliances with other tribes. (See Gen. xxiv. 3, 4; xxvi. 34, 35; xxvii. 4.) In course of time, however, when the Hebrew people assumed a nationality of a more marked character, though not yet possessed of a country of their own, the Almighty, not only as their God, but also as their King and Ruler, gave His chosen people, by His servant Moses, both religious and civil laws by which their duties to God, and their duties regulating their intercourse with their neighbours were distinctly defined. Of these, the laws regulating the degrees of relationship with which marriages are prohibited form a prominent part, and are recorded in Lev. xviii. 6-18; xx. 11-21; Deut. xxvii. 20, 22, 23. Josephus in his antiquities, b. i. ch. vi., par. 5, tells us that Sarah was the daughter of Haran, Abraham's brother, and his opinion was likewise adopted by later Jewish writers, who maintain that Iscah is only another name for Sarai, and that Terah adopted her after her father's death, so that she was only his adopted daughter. But the language employed by Abraham himself is too explicit to admit of such a hypothesis: "And yet indeed *she is my sister, she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother.*" (Ch. xx. 12.)

31. *And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth *with each other from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan, and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.*

Although there is no mention made in our verse of a call from God to Abram, yet it is evident from ch. x., 3-9, and also

*In the Authorized and Revised Versions רִצְאוּ אִתָּם (*vaiyetseu ittam*) is rendered, "and they went forth with them," which renders the passage very ambiguous, for it was "Terah" who took the persons mentioned in the verse and went out with them. Hence some interpreters change the third person plural into the third person singular, and read רִצְאָה אִתָּם (*vaiyetse ittam*), "and he went out with them," this change would remove the difficulty, but it is an arbitrary change, for which there is no authority, and a change of the sacred text should be studiously avoided if possible. Others render אִתָּם (*ittum*) in a reciprocal sense, "together" or *with each other*, which rendering I have adopted, as it makes good sense, and leaves the text unaltered. The personal pronouns in Hebrew sometimes used in a reflexive or reciprocal sense. Von Bohlen renders (*mit einander*) *with each other*, so Kalisch "with each other."

from Acts vii., 2-4, that this removing from Ur was under the direct divine guidance. In the former passage it is not stated that God called Abram in Ur, but only that he had *brought him out* from it; but according to the latter, God had "appeared" to him "before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, get thee out of thy land," &c. This removing was, therefore, not merely for the purpose of finding better pasturage, as many commentators maintain, or as Kurz—a very pious and sound writer—remarks, that "Terah's nomadic habits induced him to leave that region," (Manual of Sacred History, p. 91.) but was as we have stated, under the direct guidance of God. As there is no mention made of Nahor in our verse, it would appear that he and his family did not accompany Terah at that time, but came to Haran afterwards, since that place is in ch. xxiv., 10, spoken of as "the City of Nahor." "And Sarai his daughter-in-law," from ch. xx. 12. It is evident that Sarai was Terah's daughter, but is here called כַּלְתּוֹ (*callatho*), "his daughter-in-law," as the *wife* of Abram. Terah left Ur with the intention of going into Canaan, but on coming to Haran, a place in north-eastern Mesopotamia, he took up his abode there, probably he was tempted to do so by the fine pasturage that the place may have afforded. Haran is about 20 miles south-east of Edessa, and is by common consent identified with Corrhæ of the classical writers. It became afterwards celebrated for the defeat of Crassus by the Parthians.

32. *And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and he died in Haran.*

In this verse the history of Terah is concluded, and the sacred writer very appropriately records here that he died in Haran, although he actually survived Abram's emigration to Canaan by 60 years. This is quite evident, for according to verse 26 Terah was 70 years old when Abram was born, and according to ch. xii. 4, Abram departed from Haran when 75 years old, so that according to these numbers Terah was at that time only 145 years old, whereas our verse gives 205 years as the time of his age. In like manner Abraham's death is recorded before the birth of his grandsons Jacob and Esau, although he survived it by fifteen years. (Ch. xxv. 7, 20, 26.) In Exod. xvi. 33-34, we have another striking example of a circumstance being recorded some considerable time before it could have been executed. We read there, "And Moses said to Aaron, take a vessel, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the testimony to be kept." What Aaron is here said to have done

was in the second month after the exode (see ver. 1) and consequently a considerable time before the tabernacle was constructed. But this is readily explained; the sacred historian records here all that took place relating to the manna, and hence verse 35 contains already the information also that "the Israelites did eat manna forty years, until they came to the land which they were to inherit, although they were at this time only in the middle of the second month after their departure from Egypt. From these examples it will be seen that Moses sometimes recorded events without regard to chronological order, but rather when he deemed a suitable opportunity afforded itself of doing so. And it would be well for the reader to bear this mode of recording events in mind, it may often prevent serious misconceptions. But it will be said, that St. Stephen, Acts vii. 4, distinctly states, that Abraham removed from Haran "when his father was dead," but this has been very satisfactorily explained, "that he merely inferred this from the fact; that the call of Abram (chap. xii.) was not mentioned till after the death of Terah had been noticed, taking the order of the narrative as the order of events; whereas according to the plan of Genesis, the death of Terah is introduced here, because Abram never met with his father again after leaving Haran, and there was consequently nothing more to be related concerning him." (Keil Com. on Genesis p. 180.) And so it has been explained by many other commentators. On referring to the chronological table it will be seen that the Samaritan codex gives 145 years as the time of life of Terah, according to this reading Abram removed to Canaan the same year that his father died, but the reading of the Samaritan text is generally regarded as an arbitrary change of the Hebrew text.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *And the LORD said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.*

The sacred narrative enters now upon the history of Abram, which, as a writer has justly remarked is, "on many accounts, one of the most interesting and instructive which the pencil of inspiration has ever drawn." In reading the five books of Moses our admiration is everywhere enlisted by the minuteness with which the various events are described, and yet whilst

minuteness of description pervades the whole of the Mosaic writings, nowhere is this found to such a remarkable degree as in the history upon which we are now entering. The history of the world from the creation to the time of Abram, though replete with the most momentous events, and embracing a period of no less than upwards of 2,000 years, only occupies eleven chapters, whilst to the history of Abram, although only extending over the short period of 175 years, no less than nineteen chapters are devoted. If it now be asked why such prominence is given to this particular history, the answer is obvious, namely, that the Almighty had selected Abram from an idolatrous family, and constituted him the progenitor of His chosen people, among whom was to be preserved the true worship of Jehovah, and from whom was to spring Shiloh "to whom *shall be* *the obedience of the people." The history of Abram, therefore, lays the foundation of the national history of the Hebrews, and hence it was important that it should be given with great minuteness. The name אַבְרָם *Abram* is compounded of אָב (*av*) *father* and רַם (*ram*) *exalted*, hence *exalted father*, expressive of his *high calling*, the parents were no doubt secretly guided to bestow this highly significant name upon him. The name of Abraham is not only venerated by Jews and Christians, but also by the Arabians, Persians, and other eastern people. The Mohammedans regard him as a friend of God, and a prophet, and attribute to him the rebuilding of the sacred †Kaaba at Mecca. Ancient tradition ascribes to him a complete knowledge of astronomy, philosophy, and the invention of alphabetical writing.

After the death of Noah, which occurred only two years before the birth of Abram, according to Calmet's chronology, idolatry seems to have prevailed among all the nations, and it does not appear from the narrative that the knowledge of the true God was retained in its purity in any single family. Certain it is that even the family of Abram, and probably Abram himself in his earlier years were idolaters. This important fact we learn from Josh. xxiv. 2: "Thus said the *Lord*, the God of Israel, your fathers dwelt in old time beyond the river, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they served other gods."

"Unto a land I will show thee;" Abram was to leave his

*In the authorized version it is rendered "the gathering, but the word יִקְחָת (*yikthath*) does not admit of such a rendering, and in the Revised Version it is rendered in the manner as I have done.

†Kaaba, denotes in Arabic *square house*, it is the name of an *oblong stone building* within the great mosque at Mecca, and the Mohammedans maintain that Adam here first worshipped on this spot after his expulsion from Paradise.

native country and go into a strange land which would be shown him. He was not told that the country which he was to remove to, was a land flowing with milk and honey, or that it was in any way better than the place where he then dwelt, and where he apparently had been very prosperous; but yet, without hesitation, he obeyed the command of God. Our narrative does not give the slightest hint as to what actuated Abram to yield this ready obedience; but the Apostle Paul supplies the needed information: "By *faith* Abraham, when he was called, obeyed, to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not knowing whither he went." Heb. xi. 30. We must, however, assume that Abram received some intimation from God as to the direction he was to take, and that this direction guided him towards Canaan.

2, *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.*

The verse contains four distinct promises. Firstly—He was to be the father of a great nation; by which, however, we must not understand as is frequently done, a nation merely *great* as to population, but rather as being distinguished by signal favours as a chosen people of God. It was the religious element which constituted Israel's greatness and renown above all other nations. When Moses exhorted the Israelites to keep the statutes and judgments of God, he added, "for this *is* your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people. For what great nation *is there* that hath* God *so nigh* unto them, as the LORD our God *is* whensoever we call upon him." (Deut. iv. 6, 7.) Secondly—"I will bless thee," that is, by bestowing upon him, both temporal and spiritual favours. "The blessing of the Lord," says Solomon, "maketh rich, and he added, no sorrow with it." (Prov. 10, 22.) Thirdly—"I will make thy name great," we have already stated that the name of Abraham is not only greatly revered by Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans, but by many other nations in the East. Fourthly—"And thou shalt be a blessing," the patriarch was not only to be blessed himself, but he was likewise to be a dispenser of blessings. When Abraham departed from Haran, he was seventy-

* אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) has been rendered differently in this passage. Rosenmüller, Booth, and many others, "whose gods are so nigh to it," which is quite admissible. The Septuagint, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic Versions, and many Commentators render "who hath God." The Revised Version "a god," and in the margin "God."

five years old, and childless, from a human point of view, therefore it would not seem probable that these promises would be realized; yet who would venture to deny their having been fulfilled to the utmost extent.

3. *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

"And curse him that curseth thee;" the two verbs in the original are not the same, as would be inferred from the English version. The second verb is *מַכְלִלְךָ* (*mekallelcha*) denoting *those making light of thee or despising thee*; hence the meaning is, that God would curse him, that in any manner despised Abram, the possessor of God's blessing, and "the friend of God," for such conduct towards him would be an affront to the Almighty Himself, and as a just penalty would incur His curse.

5. *And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance which they had gathered, and the souls that they had acquired in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and they came into the land of Canaan.*

We have stated that from the already advanced age of the patriarch, and being childless, it seemed improbable that the promise, that he should become a great nation would be fulfilled, yet he staggered not at the magnitude of the promise, but by *faith* firmly believed that what God had promised, He was also able to perform. Accordingly, as soon as he had received the command, laying aside all worldly considerations of leaving relatives, friends, and country where he had prospered, he cheerfully obeyed the divine command. He set out on his journey not knowing whither he went, or what difficulties and dangers he might have to encounter on his way, or what kind of country and people he may find when he would ultimately reach his destination. All this shows the implicit faith he had in the revelation that God had made to him; and should serve as an example to all men who are also only on their journey to another country, to put their entire trust in the divine declarations contained in the sacred Scriptures, though they may contain subjects which are beyond the finite understanding to comprehend.

"And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son." There was no direct command to Lot to leave his country, but Abram "took" him, that is, induced him to accompany him; and several incidents in the subsequent narrative show the great affection of the good patriarch towards his nephew. "And

the "souls that they had †acquired," i. e., the men and maid-servants of their households. As their cattle increased, so would necessarily also their domestics. These, as the language implies, readily accompanied Abram, and probably for two reasons; in the first place, being kindly treated, and secondly, having most likely been instructed by him with the religious truths with which he himself had been impressed. And indeed Onkelos in his Chaldee version has paraphrased the passage, "And the souls which they gained in Haran for the belief in God."

6. *And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was there.*

Abram passed through the land of Canaan until he came to Shechem—that is where Shechem was afterwards built—where he made a halt. Shechem is situated in the very centre of the country, and there the promise for the future possession of the land by his descendants was first made. Shechem is no doubt to be identified with the present city Nablus, the chief town of a very fertile country, abounding with all the necessities of life. It is very pleasantly situated in a vale between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, forty miles from Jerusalem and ten miles from Shiloh. Shechem and its neighbourhood was not rendered famous only by the events which transpired there during the patriarchal ages, but also by the stirring events which took place there in the later history of the ancient Hebrews. It was here the grand and solemn national ceremony—perhaps, indeed, the most solemn in the history of the Jewish nation—the reading of the blessings and the cursings took place. (Deut. xi. 29, 30; Josh. viii. 30-35.)

It was here also where Joshua delivered his last solemn address to "the assembled tribes of Israel." (Josh. xxiv. 1-25.) Shechem was constituted a city of refuge and a Levitical city. It was there that Rehoboam was proclaimed king, and when afterwards the ten tribes revolted from the despotic rule of Rehoboam, and declared Jeroboam their king, the latter made Shechem his place of residence. (1 Kings xiii. 25.) After the Babylonish captivity it became the chief seat of the Samaritans and of their worship, their temple being built on Mount Gerizim. In the year 129 B. C., John Hyrcanus took the city and destroyed the temple. In the New Testament it occurs under the name of Sychar, (John iv. 5) which

* נפש (nephesh) here used collectively *souls*.

† "Acquired," Hebrew עָשָׂה (*asu*) lit. *they made*; but the verb is frequently also used in the sense of *to acquire*, just as with us when we say "he made a great deal of money," i. e., he acquired it.

apparently is a kind of nick-name, such as the Jews sometimes imposed upon places they disliked. According to Benjamin of Tudela, a Spanish Rabbi, who visited the place in the 12th century, there were still above a hundred Samaritans there, who observed the law of Moses only. They professed to have priests of the lineage of Aaron, who never married but with persons of sacerdotal family. They pretended that they are descended from the tribe of Ephraim. They also say that they have among them the sepulchre of Joseph. Maundrell also notices the tomb of Joseph, still bearing its name, venerated even by Moslems, who have built a small temple over it. It has always been visited by pilgrims, but especially since the Christian era, as the place where Christ revealed himself to the Samaritan woman, "To the oak of Moreh;" the oaks, were apparently generally called after the name of the owner of the property upon which the trees stood, hence "the oak of Tabor." The oak of Moreh was, however, not the only tree of the kind in the neighbourhood, for in Deut. xi. 30, we read of "the oaks of Moreh," it was probably a remarkable tree either for its great size or some other cause. In the Authorized Version אֵלֶן (elon) is in an unaccountable manner always rendered by "plain" instead of *oak*, this, however, has been properly altered in the Revised Version. Besides, the rendering "plain of Moreh," is altogether unsuitable, as the geographical features of the country in the vicinity of Shechem are very broken and mountainous.

And the Canaanite was then in the country; this circumstance was well calculated to put the patriarch's faith to a severe trial. He had now arrived in the land which God had promised He would show him, but instead of finding it uninhabited so that he might at once take possession of it, it was on the contrary already occupied by a people, which, as the sequel of the sacred narrative shows, was the most depraved of the whole human family. So far then from being the owner of the country, he was a mere wanderer in it, surrounded by wicked and warlike tribes, from whom he had nothing to expect but animosity. Yet this territory was one day to be possessed by his posterity as an inheritance. Under these circumstances, it was surely a great triumph of faith, that notwithstanding all these opposing probabilities, Abram did not for one moment doubt that God would in due time fulfil all His promises.

8. *And the Lord appeared to Abram and said, to thy seed will I give this land. And he built an altar to the Lord, who appeared to him.*

"And he built an altar to the LORD;" the place having become hallowed by the appearance of God, Abram consecrated.

it to the worship of the Almighty by building an altar on the spot. And although it is not stated here as in verse eight that he "called upon the name of the Lord," it may be inferred from the statement that "he built an altar to the Lord;" that he offered up also his devout thanks for the gracious promise made to him. The erection of this altar by Abram, seems to have invested the place ever afterwards with a peculiar sanctity, for when the Israelites had taken possession of the land, Joshua set up "the great stone," intended for ever to remind the children of Israel of their promises of obedience and piety on the same place (Josh. xxii. 25, 27.) It was there also that the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo assembled and made Abimelech king. (Judg. ix. 6.)

8. *And he removed from thence to the mountain in the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el in the west and Hai in the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.*

The narrative does not assign any reason why Abram removed from Shechem, but there must have been some cogent reason for it, for the pious patriarch would no doubt have loved to remain near the hallowed spot where the Almighty had appeared to him. Abram next pitched his tent in a mountainous district "east of Beth-el;" the name "Beth-el" is here employed by anticipation, for it was Jacob who gave it that name after his remarkable dream when on his journey from Beersheba to Haran. (Gen. xxviii. 19.) Its original name was לֹזֶר (Luz) which denotes a *tree* or *shrub* bearing *nuts*, and the town probably obtained its name from such trees or shrubs having grown in the neighbourhood, just as Jericho is sometimes called עִיר הַתְּמָרִים (*ir hattemarim*) "the city of Palm trees." In the time of the Judges the ark and the holy tabernacle were for a time in Beth-el, but in the time of the Kings it was made the centre of idolatrous worship. This called forth from the earlier prophets the severest denunciations against it, and Hosea called בֵּית־אֵל (*Beth-el*) which denotes the house of *Go!*, "בֵּית־אָוֶן" (*Beth-awen*) "the house of iniquity." (Hos. iv. 15, x. 5. *Hai was situated about three miles east of Beth-el, and was before its capture by Joshua a royal town of the Canaanites. The city was taken by stratagem and burned (Josh. vii. viii.), but was afterwards again rebuilt. According to some travellers there are still some ruins of the place to be seen, though they are very inconsiderable.

* עֵר (*ai*) the name denotes a *heap of ruins*. It is generally used with the article חֵר (*hai*) hence the English form of the word "Hai."

"And he built an altar to the Lord," from this it would appear, that wherever Abram pitched his tent, there he built also an altar, and offered up his prayers.

9. *And Abram journeyed going on still toward the South.*

His journeying was not performed by continued travelling, but by a constant removing from one place to another, according to nomad practice. But in this case his direction was always toward the South.

10. *And there was a famine in the land : and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there ; for the famine was severe in the land.*

Abram is now subjected to another severe trial. No doubt his faith was frequently put to the test by the many difficulties and probably by dangers he had to encounter on his journey from Haran, but in all likelihood he never experienced any difficulty in finding sufficient subsistence. In order to try his resignation still more God sent a famine, which compelled him to seek refuge in a country, whose great hatred for strangers, did not augur a favourable reception, or allow him to expect any acts of kindness at the hands of the inhabitants. The licentiousness of Egypt too, was well known. Yet, although he had to leave the land of Canaan, yet his faith still held him steadfast in the assurance that God's promises would in due time be fully fulfilled.

And here we may well draw a comparison between the conduct of the pious patriarch, and that of the Israelites when coming out of Egypt. Abram left at the call of God his native land, surrounded by relatives and friends, and where he seemingly had been very prosperous. The narrative does not intimate that any miracle had been performed in his behalf, and so far he had only received *the promise* that his seed should possess the land of Canaan and nothing more. Yet when the land was visited with a famine, and he was made to suffer want and hunger, there was no desire evinced to return again to his native land, where he had enjoyed plenty. And why? Because God had commanded him to come out of it. Here was *faith*, and faith begat *obedience*, and obedience led to *happiness* and *contentment*. But what a different picture does the conduct of Israel present. They had seen the stupendous miracles which God had performed in their behalf, and were actually on their way to take possession of the promised land ; and yet as soon as a want of food seemed to threaten them, instead of putting their trust in God, who had already done so much for them, they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and reproached them for having brought them away from "the flesh pots of Egypt."

Here was a *want of faith*, which begat *disobedience*, and *disobedience* led to misery and death.

11. *And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said to Sarai, his wife, Behold, I pray, I know that thou art a woman beautiful in appearance:*

12. *Therefore it will come to pass, when the Egyptians will see thee, that they will say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will let thee live.*

13. *Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.*

It appears from ch. xx. 13, that Abram had already at the time when he left his father's house requested it as a favour of Sarai that wherever they should come, she was to say that he was her brother. He must, from the depraved state of society of his own country, thought it necessary to make such an arrangement. And the command put forth by Abimelech, King of Gerar, that any one who touched Isaac, or his wife Rebecca, shall surely be put to death, (ch. xxvi. 11) shows that Abram's fear was not groundless. As Sarai was at this time sixty-five years old, and still older when on a future occasion a similar occurrence took place, whilst Abram was sojourning in Gerar (ch. xx. 2;) some of our modern writers urge that it is highly improbable that Sarai at such an advanced age should possess such charms as to attract the notice of two kings, who desired to take her for a wife. They triumphantly point to this circumstance as another proof against the credibility of the Mosaic narrative. But surely our critics could not have taken into account that Sarai lived 127 years, and, therefore was at that time only middle-aged. Eighty years is with us considered a good age to attain, and yet no one would be astonished if a woman at forty years old was to be admired for her beauty. The expression יפת מראה (*Zephath mareh*) "beautiful in appearance," employed in the original, refers to *fairness of complexion*, and would therefore be liable to attract the attention of the dark-coloured Egyptians, whose wives, both according to ancient and modern writers, were generally very homely and faded early.

Abram had until now placed implicit trust in the guidance and protection of God. Here, however, we see him for the first time to waver in his confidence, and instead of relying upon the assistance of the Almighty to shield him from the real or fancied danger, to have recourse to a device of his own creation. "Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister," as Sarai was really his step-sister, there was no untruth in this statement,

but then it conveyed the impression that she stood in no closer relation to him, which led to her being taken by Pharaoh, and on another similar occasion by Abimelech, whereas if Abram had had moral courage to tell the whole truth, judging from the reproof which both Kings administered to Abram for misleading them, they would have respected his conjugal relationship. The conduct of Abram on both occasions admits of no defence, and shows that the most righteous is subject to the common errors of humanity. And here we may remark that the Mosaic narrative, from beginning to end, bears the stamp of a most truthful record. It is natural that an historian influenced by patriotism should endeavour to place his own country and nation in as favourable a light as possible. Besides there are many circumstances which may influence the most conscientious chronicler of events in his narrative, especially in recording the acts of favourite friends or relations. He may regard it as of no great consequence to withhold little shortcomings here and there, as of no great importance to the public, whilst they might only detract from their otherwise good character.

Now let the reader go through the Bible—for this holds good as well in the records of the other inspired writers—from the beginning to the end, and carefully note at every page whether one single act can be pointed out that savours of favouritism. Noah, the man who "walked with God," which implies the most confidential intercourse, and indicates the highest degree of piety, had the accidental act of getting drunk recorded against him. Abram, "the friend of God," had his shortcomings as well as his acts of piety fully described. The events in the life of Jacob are fully given, but not in a single instance is the slightest attempt made to shield the patriarch from blame where his conduct deserved it. All the occurrences are described in the plainest language without offering one word in justification of his conduct. Again, the awful punishment that befel the sons of Aaron for using strange fire, is narrated just the same as if they had been perfect strangers to him. So Moses narrates the rebuke administered to Aaron and Miriam, his brother and sister who had spoken against him, when his wife Zipporah arrived at the camp. This shows that even the ties of relationship did not influence him to suppress anything. He even chronicles his own disobedience in smiting the rock, when God had commanded him merely to speak to it.

15. *And the princes of Pharaoh saw her," and praised her before Pharaoh : and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.*

"The princes of Pharaoh saw her," it is the dignitaries of

the court attending upon the king, and executing his commands. The term "Pharaoh," or as it occurs in hieroglyphic writings, *pher-ao*, is not a proper name, but it denotes, according to Josephus in the Egyptian language, a king. He says, "I suppose they made use of other names from their childhood, but when they were made kings, they changed them into the name which, in their own tongue, denoted their authority." (Ant. b. viii. ch. vii. par. 2.) It is in Scripture applied to at least eight different persons who filled the Egyptian throne, and is thus equivalent to the title *Cæsar* among the Romans, and *Czar* among the Russians.

Sarah being taken into Pharaoh's house, appears not to have been an arbitrary act on the part of the king, but rather in accordance with a prevailing privilege which the kings of some eastern countries enjoyed of claiming the unmarried sister or daughter of any of their subjects for their harem. This exercise of authority is generally submitted to with good grace, no matter how repugnant it may be to father or brother. And hence when Abimelech took Sarah, he justified himself that he had done so "in the integrity of his heart and innocency of his hands," supposing Abram to be her brother and therefore had a right to act as he did.

17. *And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues on account of Sarai, Abram's wife.*

"With great plagues," the word נִגְעִים (*negaim*) employed in the original, primarily denotes *strokes* or *blows*, though it is frequently also used to express *calamities* or *judgments* sent from God. The narrative does not inform us what these visitations were, but as Pharaoh's conduct appears from verses 15-19, to have been honourable, and that he would not have taken Sarah had he known that she was Abram's wife, it is probable that they were not of such a severe nature as the rendering in our version indicates. They were likely of such a kind, that whilst they preserved Sarah from dishonour, they at the same time induced the King to search into their cause. Josephus says that he inquired of the priest how he might be freed from the calamities, who told him that his miserable condition was derived from the wrath of God on account of the stranger's wife. (Ant. b. i. ch. viii. par. 1.) It is, however, very likely that Pharaoh, on instituting inquiries, learned from Sarah herself her true relationship to Abram, and directly sent for Abram and reproved him for having thus misled him in not telling the whole truth. Abram attempted no justification for his conduct: he could not well do so.

The sacred narrative relative to the short sojourn of Abram

in Egypt, brings before us three important lessons. In the first place, it sets forth the proneness of man to err, as is exemplified in the conduct of the pious patriarch. Secondly, it shows how mercifully our heavenly Father deals with his erring children. Although Abram rather put his trust for the preservation of his life in a device of his own, instead of looking for protection to God, yet by an act of Divine mercy he and his wife were shielded from harm. And thirdly, it testifies to the sacredness of the marriage state. God, by His special intervention, protected Sarah amidst her imminent dangers.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the South.*

Pharaoh not only returned Sarah to Abram, but also commanded that he should be permitted to depart and journey through the land unmolested. But the patriarch remained no longer in Egypt than necessity compelled him, and when he departed from the country he went into the southern part of Canaan.

2. *And Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.*

From our verse we learn that Abram prospered in Egypt. He left the country not only enriched in cattle, but had also much gold and silver. The usual riches of the Bedouin consists in herds and flocks. The patriarch obtained the "silver and gold" no doubt, from the sale of animals, milk, butter, and wool to the towns-people, for the Egyptians themselves hated pastoral pursuits.

3. *And he went on his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been in the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;*

4. *To the place where the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.*

"Went on his journeys," in the original it is *יָלַךְ לְמַסְעָיו* (*yelech lemassa'āv*) "went according to his breakings up" or "removings," that is, he went from place to place, remaining a longer or shorter time at some of the places according as they furnished pasturage. According to the rendering of the Septuagint and Vulgate versions, he pursued the same route, and

stopped at the same stations as he did on his way down into Egypt. "And there Abram called on the name of the Lord," Abram had no doubt offered up his devout thanks to the Almighty for the providential protection vouchsafed him, long before he had come to this place, but the expression, "to call upon the name of the LORD," implies always a more *profound devotion* than the offering up of an *ordinary prayer*, and hence we find it only used on particular occasions.

5. *And Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.*

Lot who had been the constant companion to Abram since they left Haran, was also blessed with wealth. "Tents" is here like 1 Chron. iv. 41, used as including also the occupants of them. He had not merely "tents" but also a retinue to occupy them.

6. *And the land did not bear them, that they might dwell together : for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.*

Their cattle had become so numerous that the land did not furnish sufficient pasturage for them all. This insufficiency, however, did not altogether arise from the land not producing it, but to a great extent no doubt, from the circumstance that the district was already occupied by the Canaanite and Perizzite, and who naturally had selected for themselves the most productive parts. The statement that "the Canaanite and Perizzite dwelled then in the land" (v. 7) seems to be parenthetically introduced to show that this was partly the cause of an insufficient supply of pasturage. "Perizzite" is not the name of a *nation*, or of a particular tribe, but denotes *people* dwelling "without walls and bars and gates" (Ezek. xxxviii. 11) in fact inhabiting the open country and mountains. Hence we find them in all parts of the land of Canaan. The insufficient supply of pasturage, and perhaps also of water, gave rise to contentions between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle.

8. *And Abram said to Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are *kinsmen*

The language does not imply that Abram and Lot themselves

*אֲנָשִׁים אֶחָדִים literally *men brethren*. The term אָח (*ach*) brother, was among the ancient Hebrews, as it is frequently with us used in a wider sense. The term was not only applied to a *kinsman*, or one belonging to the Hebrew nation, but also to a person belonging to any nation whatever. (See Lev. xix. 17; Ps. xlix. 8; Is. lxvi. 20.)

took any part in the strife, but that it might ultimately lead to unfriendly feelings between them. The peaceful patriarch, therefore, resolved at once to take steps to prevent such an evil, and in doing so he laid all personal considerations aside.

9. *Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.*

10. *And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, towards Zoar.*

"Is not the whole land before thee?" Abram, although the head of the company, with a generous spirit allowed his nephew the unlimited choice to select whatever portion of the country he pleased. In this act, the pious patriarch displayed a truly noble disinterestedness such as is not often met with amongst mankind. He trusted in God, that He would provide for him no matter where he went. The conduct of Lot, on the contrary, displays an inordinate degree of selfishness, and a craving for worldly interests. Out of common politeness, to say nothing of propriety, he ought to have returned the compliment and asked Abram to choose first; but instead of doing so, he eagerly availed himself of the liberty thus granted him and selected "the district of Jordan," which comprised the plains adjoining Jordan from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, at present called *El Ghor*, that is, "plain and depressed country." (Gesen. Thes. p. 717.) The great fertility of this district at that time may be inferred from the manner which Moses here speaks of it. He describes it to have been "like the garden of the LORD," it is the garden of Eden planted by the LORD; "like the land of Egypt," whose soil is rendered so highly fertile by the annual overflow of the Nile. "Towards Zoar" must not be read in connection with "the land of Egypt," but forms an independent sentence, and marks the southern extremity of the fertile region. "Zoar" is here mentioned by anticipation, its more ancient name was Bela (see ch. xiv. 8.) The origin of the name Zoar (צֶרֶר, *i. e.*, the little one) is recorded in ch. xix. 20, and long before Moses wrote was in common use.

The river Jordan (יַרְדֵּן, *i. e.*, a flowing down), according to Burckhardt and other eminent travellers, rises about four miles north-east from Banias, in a plain near the hill called Tel-el-Radi, in its way it passes through the lake of Tiberias and loses itself in the Dead Sea. There are close thickets all along the banks of the river, and upon the lower plain, which at one time afforded shelter for wild beasts. On the periodical overflowing of the river, when they were driven from their covers,

they caused great alarm to the inhabitants of the valley, which will explain the simile in Jer. xlix. 19, "Behold he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan, against the habitations of the strong."

12. *Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tents as far as Sodom.*

'He pitched his tents as far as Sodom,' that is, by constantly moving from place to place, he gradually came as far as Sodom. In the Authorized and Revised versions וַיִּצְחַל (waiyēḥal) is rendered, "and he pitched *his* tent," which is quite correct, but the use of the plural *tents* is just as correct, and as Lot had a large number of servants it is, we think, more appropriate. In the choice which Lot made we have the old proverb "it is not all gold that glitters" fully exemplified. He saw the region of Jordan, and to all appearance it was a most delightful spot; and yet it was a curse-laden spot; the population it contained was the most depraved, the most abandoned upon the whole face of the earth. When Lot approached Sodom, and seeing the great wickedness of its inhabitants, we may suppose that he fully purposed to keep aloof from the place; but whatever his good intentions at first were, the next we hear of him, we find him actually dwelling in Sodom. This only shows how careful we ought to be to keep away from evil influences. From 2 Peter ii. 8 we learn how Lot was affected by the iniquity of the inhabitants: "for that righteous man dwelling among them in seeing and hearing vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* lawless deeds." Why Lot, however, should have remained in a place so steeped in the grossest wickedness is not easily comprehended, and can only be accounted for either by the neighbourhood affording an abundant supply of pasturage for his flocks, or on account of family connections, for according to chapter xix. he had daughters married in Sodom.

14. *And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thy eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward;*

15. *For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever.*

The sacred narrative having informed us where Lot had located himself, and briefly stated (v. 13) what kind of society he had fallen in with, now returns again to Abram, whose seed alone was to inherit the land. The promise contained in our passage had already on a former occasion been briefly made, "Unto

thy seed will I give this land," (ch. xii. 7,) it is, however, here not only renewed, but also enlarged. He was asked to lift up his eyes and look in all directions, the whole land was to belong to his posterity "for ever."

The departure of Lot must have caused sincere and profound grief to the kind-hearted patriarch, who found himself now deprived of the company of his nephew, whom he had brought with him from the land of idolatry, and instructed him in the knowledge of Jehovah. We have, therefore, here another striking instance of God's considerate kindness, in just selecting this period to renew His promises to Abram, and to comfort him with assurances of his future inheritance.

As the land of Canaan has now for more than two thousand years been in the hands of the gentiles, and the Jews themselves have been scattered over the world, and more or less subjected to barbarous treatment, the expression "and to thy seed for ever," has proved rather perplexing to interpreters in their endeavour to explain it. It is, therefore, not surprising that we should find various theories advanced. It is by some maintained that the promise was merely conditional, namely, if they persevered in the true faith and kept God's commandments; and they appeal to Lev. xxvi. 27-33; Is. lxiii. 18. The language in our text, however, implies an absolute gift. Many commentators maintain that the promise has only been partially fulfilled, and will receive its full accomplishment only when the Jews shall hereafter be gathered from out of all nations, and be restored to the land of their fathers. This gathering out of all nations is distinctly promised in Deut. xxx. 3, 4, 5. So again Is. xi. 12, "and he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." In Jer. xxxi. this gathering of Israel is also distinctly set forth, and in verse 12 it is stated, that those who are gathered "shall not sorrow any more." The prophet Ezek. xi. 17-19; and ch. xxxvii. 25-27, likewise plainly teaches, that Israel shall dwell in the land that had been given "unto Jacob", that they should dwell in it, even their children, and their children's children "for ever." Notwithstanding these plain declarations, some of our modern critics still persist in maintaining, that the only return of the Jews to their own land promised by the Almighty was fulfilled when they returned from the Babylonish captivity. Again, many writers maintain, that the promise made to Abram must not be exclusively applied to his descendants, to his seed according to the flesh, but to the true spiritual seed, which in faith embraced the promise, and with a believing heart held it fast.

16 And I shall make thy seed as the dust of the earth : so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then thy seed shall also be numbered.

"As the dust of the earth," is a hyperbolical expression meaning very numerous descendants. The same figure is again employed in the promise made to Jacob, ch. xxviii. 14. Similar figurative expressions are, "as the sand of the sea," ch. xxxii. 13 ; "as the stars of heaven," ch. xxii. 17, ch. xxvi. 4 ; Deut. i. 10.

17. Arise, and pass through the land in its length and breadth ; for to thee shall I give it.

Abram is commanded to pass through the length and breadth of the land, and thus virtually taking possession of it.

18. And Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Abram now removed from Beth-el, and travelling southward until he came to an oak-grove at Hebron, where he pitched his tent. His first act was to build an altar to the LORD. Hebron is situated about 27 miles south of Jerusalem, and was one of the oldest towns of Palestine. According to Num. xiii. 22, it was built seven years before Zoan (Tanis) in Egypt. The original name of Hebron was קִרְיַת אַרְבַּע (*Kiryath Arba*), i. e., *the city of Arba*, evidently so-called after a great man among the Anakim (Josh. xiv. 15), whose birth place it probably was. According to Jerome and the Rabbinical writers it received this name from the four celebrated couples who were buried there, namely, Adam and Eve ; Abram and Sarah ; Isaac and Rebekah ; Jacob and Leah ; they have taken אַרְבַּע (*Arba*) as the numeral *four*. There is, however, no ground whatever for supposing that Adam and Eve were buried there ; their place of interment is nowhere mentioned. From the time that Abram took up his abode in Hebron, the place became quite celebrated in the history of the Jews. It was here where the angels announced to him that a son was to be born to him. It was here that he bought from Ephron the Hittite a burying-place, and where afterwards himself, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah and Leah were buried. In the time of Joshua it was selected as one of the places of refuge, and assigned to the Levites. It appears also from 2 Sam. xv. 7, 9, that vows were taken and performed there. David, when he was King of Judah, chose it as a place of residence for seven and a half years (2 Sam. ii. 1. ch. v. 5.) The circumstance of Abram, Isaac and Jacob and their wives being buried there, has led to several battles between Christians and Mussulmen for its possession. In the time of the Crusades,

after having suffered greatly from heavy attacks, it became, in 1167, the seat of the bishopric of St. Abraham, but in 1187 it fell again in the hands of the Moslems, and remains in their possession ever since. The tombs of the three patriarchs and their wives are situated at the eastern end of Hebron on the slope of a ravine. As might be expected, the place is constantly visited by travellers. The Mohammedans have erected over the cave of Machpelah a mosque, which they regard as one of the four holiest sanctuaries of the world. It is surrounded by a high and strong wall, and from which Jews and Christians are strictly excluded. Still now and then some bold European by stratagem makes his way into it. From the mosque, the town itself is by the Moslems called "*Beth El Khalil*," that is, "*the house of the friend of God*." At present Hebron is only a large village, having among its inhabitants about one hundred Jewish families. It has extensive glass-works. The pool at which David had the murderers of Ish-bosheth hung up (2 Sam. iv. 12) is still to be seen there.

"The oaks of Mamre," probably an oak grove and called after the owner, one of the three brothers mentioned as confederates with Abram (ch. xiv. 13.)

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations ;*

2. *That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Belah, that is Zoar.*

The great political event introduced in the above two verses is only connected with the history of the Hebrews from the part which Abram was incidentally obliged to take in it. The kings spoken of are not mentioned again in the subsequent narrative. And here it is important to remark that the term מֶלֶךְ (*melech*)

"king" in those primitive times was applied to mere chieftains or heads of tribes ruling over a single town and the surrounding district. This is evident from the kings mentioned in the second verse being only spoken of as kings of cities, which were situated only a few miles from each other. Indeed, even in later times princes, vice-roys, and satraps of great monarchs were sometimes dignified with the title king. (Compare Is. x. 8.) Hence the great monarchs assumed the title of "great king" (Is. xxxvi. 4), or of "king of kings" (Dan. ii. 37), (Ezra vii. 12.)

It is evident that although Amraphel king of Shinar, is first mentioned, yet Chedorlaomer King of Elam, was the principal

one interested in this war, and that the other kings were merely his allies, though no doubt induced to take part in the undertaking in the hope of deriving some substantial gain from it. It appears that Chedorlaomer had previously subjugated the region along the valley of the Jordan. At the time of our narrative, there existed in the valley five chief towns, each having its own king. With the conquest of the territory the kings became tributary to the king of Elam, and for twelve years submitted to the burden imposed upon them, but in the thirteenth year probably thinking themselves now strong enough to cope with their oppressor—"they rebelled", refusing any longer to pay the tribute. The loss of the tribute from the five kings in itself would probably have been sufficient cause to induce Chedorlaomer to wage war against them and to chastise them, but besides this there was the importance of the valley in a commercial and military point of view, as securing a connection between the Euphrates and the Nile, and as affording a military road leading to the west and the south. Another of the allies was "Arioch, king of Ellasar," the territory over which this king reigned can not now be determined with any certainty. According to the Vulgate it was *Pontus*; according to Saadia, *Syria*; some writers regard it to be identical with Telassar mentioned in Is. xxxviii. 12, a region in Mesopotamia. Tidal, one of the allies is called "king of nations," but what nations did he rule over?

Now, as the term גוֹיִם (*goyim*) is generally rendered *gentiles*, and as Galilee is in Is. viii. 23, Eng. Vers. xi. 1, and elsewhere, called גליל גוֹיִם (*Gelil goyim*) "Galilee of the gentiles" or "nations," a great many commentators have supposed that Tidal's territory lay in Upper Galilee. But this supposition is not tenable, for Upper Galilee only received this appellation long after Moses' time, when the Israelites had taken possession of the land of Canaan, from its having a large gentile population, especially Phœnecians whose country lay near to it. It is far more probable that Tidal was merely a chieftain of some marauding tribes who had no permanent abodes, and hence he is merely spoken of as "king of nations," without naming the territory over which he ruled.

If we examine the motives which led to the military operations recorded in our chapter, we find they are precisely the same as those which, unhappily, ever since have led to so much bloodshed, and have been productive of so much misery among the human family throughout the world, namely, grasping ambition, selfishness, an inordinate desire for power and wealth.

3. *All these joined in the vale of Siddim, that is the Salt Sea.*

"All these," that is the five kings, came with their forces

into the vale of Siddim to defend their territory. It appears from our verse that the part of the valley which is now occupied by the Dead Sea was formerly called Siddim.* This place was from a strategic point of view well chosen, as it was full of dangerous bitumen-pits, by which they no doubt hoped to ensnare their enemies not acquainted with the locality. It appears, however, from verse 10 that when they were defeated, in the haste of flight, many of their own army perished in those very pits which they hoped would prove fatal to their enemies.

5. *And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim.*

6. *And the Horites in their mount Seir, to the oak of Paran, which is by the wilderness.*

It appears from these verses that Chedorlaomer did not confine his military operations to the chastisement of the five kings only, but on his way attacked other tribes. In what way these had incurred his displeasure the narrative does not afford any information. Probably they had also been tributary to him, and had cast off his yoke.

The "Rephaim" were a giant race of extraordinary stature. According to Deut. iii. 11, the iron bedstead of Og, their last king, was "nine cubits" (13½ feet) long, and "four cubits" (6 feet) in breadth. The chief town of the Rephaim was †Ashteroth Karnaim in the district of Bashan.

"The Zuzim," a tribe of the same class as the Rephaim, and occupied the country between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok. They were no doubt identical with the people who were by the Ammonites called "*Zamzummim*," and are spoken of as "a great people, and many, and tall, as the Anakim" (Deut. ii. 20, 21.) Their chief city seems to have been "Ham," but as to its locality nothing has as yet been discovered so as to identify it with any certainty.

"The Emim" were also a mighty and ferocious giant tribe. Their very name אַמִּים (*Emim*) denotes *terror*. They had their abode in "Shaveh Kiriathaim," i.e., the plain of Kiriathaim (double city). It is, in verse 17, also called "the valley of Shaveh" and "the kings valley." It was situated in the territory afterwards allotted to the tribe of Reuben, but before the exile it fell again into the hands of the Moabites (Jer. xlviii. 23,

* שִׁדִּים *Siddim*, most likely an irregular plural of שִׁדָּה (*sadeh*) hence *fields*; and thus some of the ancient versions render "valley of the fields."

† אֲשֶׁתְרוֹת כַּרְנַיִם (*Ashteroth Karnaim*) denotes the two horned *Ashteroth*, and the city was no doubt so called from a temple erected there to the goddess *Ashteroth*, and the figure of the goddess being represented with two horns.

Ezek. xxv. 9). Burckhardt and some other writers speak of ruins a little south-west from Makour (Machaerus) which are still called *Kareyat*.

The Horites (הֹרִי), as their name imports, were dwellers in caverns, and had their abodes in Mount Seir in the country of the Edomites. Hence Seir and Edom are sometimes used as synonymous terms. These abodes, which nature had provided, were used from the earliest times as habitations. Sometimes they were by art enlarged and divided into apartments, and were in some instances spacious enough to afford sufficient room for many hundreds or even many thousand individuals. The Horites remind us of the Troglodites in Africa. "To the oak of Paran." This oak apparently was a noted tree at that time, and stood on the borders of Edom. The desert of Paran lies between the land of Edom and Egypt.

7. *And they returned, and came to En-mishpat, the same is Kadesh, and smote all the territory of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwell in Hazezon-tamar.*

Having overcome the Horites, they turned about, and, marching northward, they arrived in the wilderness of Zin, which formed a part of the desert of Paran, and came to En-mishpat, situated on the frontier of Idumea, "Kadesh," (קֶדֶשׁ *Kadesh*, i. e., *sacred*), also called Kadesh Barnea (*קֶדֶשׁ בַּרְנֶה *Kadesh Barnea*, i. e., *the sacred desert of wandering*.) In the town or near it there was a well called עֵין מִשְׁפַּט

En-mishpat, i. e., *Well of Judgment*, but why it was so called we are nowhere informed. Probably there was an oracle or shrine there which the people were accustomed to consult. Notwithstanding the diligent exploration of eastern travellers in order to discover the true site of Kadesh, they have as yet failed to agree as to its identity. Dr Stanley supposed it to be at *Petra*, but I am not aware that his opinion has been adopted by any other traveller. Robinson places it in the western part of the Arabah, near the fountain *Ain el Weibeh*, whilst Mr. Rowland—and whose opinion is now very generally favoured—finds it at the fountain now called *Ain el Kades*, but identical with *En-mishpat*, about 12 miles E. S. E. of Moyle, in the east of the most elevated part of *Jebel Halal*. From there the caravan roads lead to *Petra*, to Mount Sinai, and to the interior of the Holy Land. (See Williams' *Holy City*, pp. 466—

*Simonis regards בַּרְנֶה (*Barnea*) as compounded of בָּר (*Bar*) *open country* or desert, and נֶה (*Na*) *wandering*, from נָדַע *to wander about*.

Fürst suggests בָּר (*Bar*) *a son*, and נֶה *wandering*, i. e., *son of wandering*, viz., *Bel-min*.

488.) At Kadesh, Miriam died, and, according to Jerome, there was in his time (4th century) still a monument shown there.

"And smote all the *territory of the Amalekites," that is, the territory which the Amalekites afterwards occupied, for, according to ch. xxxvi. 12, Amalek, the progenitor of the Amalekites, was the grandson of Esau. But Moses speaks of the places by the names by which they were best known in his time. It will be seen that our text does not say that the Amalekites were smitten, but "the territory," that is, the people who at that time occupied it. Emboldened by their constant successes, they even ventured to attack the Amorites, the most war-like and powerful tribe of Canaan. Hazezon-tamar, one of the chief towns of the Amorites, situated on the western shore of the Dead Sea, in a region fertile and abounding with palm-trees. Hence the name of the town *הַצֶּצֶן הַתָּמָר* (*Chazezon-tamar*) *pruning of the palm*. The place was afterwards called *עֵין גִּדִּי* (*En-gedi*) i. e., *fountain of the kid*.

After the conquest of the Amorites, Chedorlaomer and his allies now marched against the five kings of the districts of the Jordan. The latter, as already stated, united their forces in the vale of Siddim, where they were attacked and completely routed. Those who did not perish in battle, or in the asphalt-pits, fled into the †mountains which intersect the territory of the Moabites. Mountains throughout Scripture are spoken of as places of refuge.

In their former victories, it is not stated that they carried off any plunder, perhaps they could not encumber themselves with it; but after this last victory, "they took all the property of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their victuals," (v. 11.) Among the captives that were carried off was Lot, whom they had taken with all his property. He that makes companionship with wicked men runs the risk of sharing the evils with which they may be visited. As Solomon declares:

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise,
But the companion of fools shall suffer for it."

Prov. xiii. 20.

13. *And there came one who had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he was dwelling at the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and these were †confederate with Abram.*

* "All the territory," Heb. *כָּל שָׂדֵה* (*col sadeh*) lit. "all the field," but the word *שָׂדֵה* (*sadeh*) field is often used in a wider sense, like our word field, to denote a large tract of country. See again 1 Sam. vi. 1; xxvii. 7; Ruth i. 6.

† *הָרָה* (*harah*), the singular, denotes here mountainous district.

‡ "Confederates," Heb. *בְּעָלֵי בְרִית* (*baale berith*) *possessors of a covenant*, synonymous with *אֲנָשֵׁי בְרִית* (*anshe berith*) *men of a covenant* i. e. confederates.

We may reasonably infer that the fugitive who brought the tidings to Abram was one of Lot's servants who knew where the patriarch resided. "And told Abram the Hebrew;" there are two prevailing opinions as regards the origin of the term "Hebrew." The Hebrew writers generally consider the term to be a patronimic from the patriarch *Eber* the great-grandson of Shem mentioned in Genesis x. 24, 25. But as this patriarch obtained no special notoriety, but is only spoken of in the genealogical account that he lived and died, it is not likely that Abram, who was the sixth in generation from Eber, took the appellation Hebrew from him. It is justly asked why should Abram call himself after Eber, rather than from any of his other ancestors? Why not rather after the patriarch Shem? This mode of deriving the appellation "Hebrew" being justly considered as altogether unsatisfactory, most modern critics, with a greater show of reason, have regarded the term as an appellation from עֵבֶר (*ever*) *one passing over, an immigrant*, and as having been first applied by the Cananites to Abram and those that had come with him from having passed over the Euphrates on their journey from the east to the land of Canaan. This supposition is strongly favoured by our passage "and told Abram הֵעֲבָרִי (*ha-ivri*) the Hebrew," i. e. *the immigrant*, and is so rendered in the Septuagint (τὸ πέραν) *the passenger*. The term Hebrew remained after that the distinctive name of the Jewish people.

14. *And when Abram heard that his kinsman* was taken captive, he led forth his tried servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them till Dan.*

The aged patriarch who, though he had been accustomed to lead a peaceful pastoral life, and unacquainted with the manner of carrying on a warfare, on hearing of the misfortune that befel his kinsman, did not lose a moment to perform the duty which as a relative devolved upon him. Without making any special preparation for the contest he was about to engage in, he hastily led forth 318 tried servants, and as it appears from verse 24, some men furnished by his allies, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, and pursued the enemy as far as Dan. Now, here it is important to observe, that the place here spoken of by the

אָחִיב (*ashiv*) "his kinsman," rendered in the Authorized and Revised Versions "his brother." As Lot was Abram's *nephew*, some who are not acquainted with Hebrew phraseology, may, by the rendering "his brother," be led to suppose that there is a discrepancy here. As the Hebrew word אָח (*ach*), a brother, was used in other senses, as *kinsman, ally, fellow-countryman, friend, one of the same tribe, fellow man*, it is desirable, in order to prevent ambiguity, to select the meaning best suited to the context. And, we think, it is a pity, that in the Revised Version the rendering *kinsman* was not adopted.

name of "Dan," cannot possibly be the town of that name in the extreme northern part of Palestine, which only received that name in the time of the Judges, (see Judges xviii. 28, 29,) after a portion of the tribe had conquered it, and took up their abode there, but was up to that time called "Laish." Moses, therefore, could not have spoken of the town under the name of Dan which it only received long after his death. Some of our modern critics discover here "a glaring anachronism," whilst many orthodox commentators, to get over the apparent difficulty, suppose that the words "till Dan," were interpolated by some other hand to render the passage more clear. It is even conjectured that this and other similar interpolations, had been made by Ezra, when he revised the Old Testament Scriptures. But there is not the least necessity for supposing either "an anachronism," or an "interpolation," the Dan of our verse is evidently the other northern town Dan-Jaan mentioned in 2 Sam. xxiv. 6, situated between Gilead and Sidon, and which is quite suitable to our passage. It has, indeed, been justly remarked, that if the northern boundary town had been intended here, the text would most likely have been "Laish which is Dan," just as it is said "the vale of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea," (ver. 3); "En-mishpat, which is Kadish," (ver. 7); and "the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's vale," (ver. 17.) Some commentators render חֲנִיכָיו (*chanichav*), "his trained servants," i. e., trained or experienced in warfare, but such a rendering, although admissible is not suitable, for it is not probable that the peaceful patriarch, to whom the contentions of the herdmen was distressing, would *train* his servants in the murderous art of war. The meaning of the word here is "his trusty servants," such as could be depended upon. This is made still more evident, by the following words "born in his own house," it is those who had grown up in his household, and had become attached to him. Those servants would naturally be more trustworthy than those that had been hired or bought.

15. *And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them to Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.*

"And he divided himself." The tactics employed here by Abram are precisely the same as were afterwards so frequently adopted by the Hebrews and among the Arabians. The army was generally divided into three divisions, and these attacked the enemy simultaneously in the centre and on the two wings. The assault was generally made at night, and from ambush. (Compare Josh. viii. 2, 12; Judg. vii. 16, &c.) Among the

Arabians they generally manage to fall upon the enemy an hour or so before daylight, when they are sure to find the camp asleep. They make a sudden rush upon the enemy, and knock down the principal tent-poles, and by thus enveloping the men in their tent-cloths renders the victory even over a much superior force easy. Unless when an immediate attack was apprehended, it appears they did not set sentinels. "And pursued them unto Hobah which is on the left hand of Damascus," rendered in the Chaldee Version "on the north of Damascus." This rendering is quite admissible, for the ancient Hebrews, in speaking of the points of the compass, supposed the face to be directed to the east, hence *the right hand* denotes the south, and *the left hand* the north. This agrees with the village *Hoba* mentioned by Troilo, situated about a quarter of a mile to the north of Damascus (Trav. p. 584.) Damascus is probably the most ancient city in the world. According to Josephus it was founded by Uz, the great-grandson of Noah. But whether there is any truth in this tradition, certain it is that already in the time of Abram it had become a place of consequence. Damascus, unlike most of the cities of the east, can boast of having retained its prosperity under every change of dynasty. The city is about six miles in circumference, and together with the adjoining village Salahiyeh has a population of about 150,000, of whom about 127,000 are Mohammedans, 17,000 Christians, and 6,000 Jews. The situation of the city is unrivalled for beauty, situated as it is in a luxuriant plain at the eastern base of Anti-Lebanon, and when viewed from the neighbouring hills its appearance is charming. The bright buildings with the vast number of domes and minarets sparkling beneath the eastern sun, rise out of a sea of various tinted foliage, while all around—except on the north-west where stretches the bare snow-white ridge of the Anti-Lebanon—extend beautiful gardens, rich corn fields, and blooming orchards, watered by the river Barrada (the *אבנא *Abanah* of Scripture, (2nd Kings v. 12) and its branches. The traveller is, however, greatly disappointed when entering the city, he finds the streets narrow and dirty, and almost entirely blocked with loaded donkeys. The best street is the one called "Straight" (Acts ix. 11). The external appearance of the houses is for the most part mean, but the interior of the dwellings of the wealthier classes are truly magnificent and luxuriously furnished. The Great Mosque, formerly a heathen temple, then a Christian church, composed of different kinds of architecture, is one of the handsomest ecclesiastical buildings that the Mohammedans can boast of. The bazaars are very numerous, and finer than

* The marginal reading gives אַמנָה *Amanah*.

either those of Cairo or Constantinople, and well supplied with goods of European and Oriental manufacture.

17. *And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from defeating Chedorlaomer, and the kings who were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's vale.*

Whether "the king of Sodom" here spoken of is the same that fought against Chedorlaomer, and was one of those who were fortunate enough to make their escape, or whether it was his successor, is impossible to determine. This, however, is of no importance. The victory of Abram with his insignificant band over such a superior force, which had been victorious in all its previous engagements, must naturally have excited great astonishment, and afforded much satisfaction to those who had been vanquished. We accordingly see, several kings come to meet him on his return to congratulate him on the great victory he had achieved. The meeting took place in the valley of Shaveh near Jerusalem, which afterwards—no doubt in commemoration of this event—was called "the king's vale", and is the same in which Absalom "reared up a pillar for himself", in order to keep his name in remembrance. (2 Sam. xviii. 18.)

18. *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine : and he was priest of the Most High God.*

19. *And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth :*

20. *And Blessed be the Most High God, who hath delivered thy enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all.*

We learn from this passage that the king of Salem also went out to meet Abram. It is generally supposed that Melchizedek founded the city in the year 2023, and called it שְׁלֵם (*Shalem*) Salem, i. e. *peace*. About a century after its foundation it was captured by the Jebusites who called it Jebus after their progenitor Jebus son of Canaan. After the city was conquered by the Israelites the ancient name was restored who added the prefix יְרוּשָׁלַם (*yerush*) i. e. *possession* and called it יְרוּשָׁלַם שְׁלֵם Jerusalem, i. e. *possession of peace*. We are in the above passage introduced to a mysterious personage, mysterious on account of his illustrious and sacred character, but respecting whom Scripture furnishes but little information. He bears the highly significant name מֶלְכִּי צֶדֶק Melchizedek, i. e. *king of righteousness*, and combines in his person both the dignity of a king and the sacred office of priest to the Most High God. After what has been said of him in our passage, we hear nothing

more of him for nearly 1000 years, when the Psalmist speaks of him as the type of the Messiah.

"The Lord has sworn and will not repent,
Thou art a priest for ever
After the order (or manner) of Melchizedek." (Ps. cx. 4.)

Again, 1,000 years elapse before we hear him again spoken of, this time the apostle Paul speaks of him as the type of Christ. (Heb. vii.) The person of Melchizedek, therefore, presents an interesting subject of enquiry, and has accordingly engaged the attention from very early times, both of Jewish and Christian writers. The result of the enquiries has indeed been productive of a vast number of theories, but as might be expected from the absence of any direct Scriptural information, they have absolutely furnished nothing that can positively be relied upon. Many of the theories advanced are so absurd that they are not deserving of any notice, they, however, acknowledge in all cases the high character of Melchizedek. From the fact that neither the parents nor the birth and death of Melchizedek are mentioned he has at a very early period of the Christian era been regarded as the Messiah appearing in human form. Some have regarded him to have been an angel. This theory Jerome ascribes to Origen and Didymus. The patristic writers of the 4th and 5th centuries vehemently denounced the tenet of the Melchizedekians, that he was a *Power*, a *Virtue*, or *Influence*. Leaving these and other wild theories for what they are worth, we refer to one which has been favoured by very many eminent Jewish and Christian writers from the Christian era to the present day, and which at least has plausibility in its favour, though it may not by some be deemed as altogether satisfactory. We allude to the hypothesis that "Melchizedek was none other than Shem, the son of Noah." That this was a tradition of the ancient Jews, is evident from its being recorded in the Targum of Pseudo Jonathan, and the Jerusalem Targum. There is no allusion made to it in the Targum of Onkelos, (Chaldee Version), but this is readily accounted for, the latter being a *Version*, therefore, adheres more strictly to the original text, whilst the former two are merely paraphrases often giving free translations and explanations. This tradition is also spoken of in the Talmud, as the following extract will show: "Rabbi Jochannan ben Nuri says:—"The Holy one—blessed be His name—took Shem and separated him to be a priest to Himself, that he might serve before Him. He also caused the Shechinah to rest upon him, and called his name Melchizedek." (Avodath Hakkotesh, part 3, ch. 20.) Jerome, in his *Epistle ad Evangelum* (Opp. i. 438), which is entirely devoted to the person of Melchizedek, states that this was the prevailing

opinion of the Jews in his time. The same opinion was entertained by the celebrated Syrian divine and scholar Ephraim, and by the eminent Jewish commentator Rashi, and other Rabbinic writers. It was afterwards also embraced by Luther, Melancthon, H. Broughton, Selden, Lightfoot, and many other Christian scholars, and among them especially by the eminent Biblical scholar Charles Taylor, who most elaborately supports this opinion. (Fragments to Calmet, No. 660, vol iv. pp. 345-359.) If, indeed, the identity of Shem with Melchizedek could be satisfactorily established, it would certainly, to a great extent remove the mystery with which the brief Scriptural account of Melchizedek is involved. The fact that so many eminent men have accepted the ancient Jewish tradition, at least shows the plausibility of it, if nothing more, for we may rest assured that they gave this important subject a full and careful consideration. And when we come to examine into the subject more closely, we certainly find that the difficulty of identifying Melchizedek with Shem is after all not so great as it at first sight may appear. We have already shown that Shem was for some time contemporary with Abram. Indeed, according to Calmet's chronological table, he lived forty-three years after the birth of Isaac, so that there is no difficulty on this point. Leading a pastoral life like the other patriarchs, he would like them be obliged to move from place to place in search of pasturage, and in the course of his wanderings may have come to the place mentioned in our passage, and finding the same pleasant and suitable took up his permanent abode there, and in the course of time built a city and called it Salem. It must be borne in mind that upwards of 400 years elapsed between the flood and the occurrence recorded in our passage, during such a lengthy period a city of considerable size may spring up. Shem being the founder of the city, it is but natural that he would be also the ruler of it. How far beyond the city his dominion extended it is impossible to say. Then as to his being also spoken of as "a priest of the Most High God," this circumstance also argues in favour of Shem, for before the regular institution of the *priesthood* under the Mosaic law the patriarchs, as the heads of the families, performed the office of *priesthood*, they offered up sacrifices and instructed their households in their religious duties. Thus we find Job offering up burnt offerings for his sons (Job i. 5).

But, it is asked, how did Shem obtain the name Melchizedek? And why does Moses not speak of him by the former name? As to the first question the etymology of the name itself suggests the answer. The name was no doubt bestowed from the king having ruled his people in righteousness. And this circumstance argues likewise in favour of Shem, for as Noah

was a "preacher of righteousness" to the antediluvians we may think the same of his son Shem, who succeeded him in the priesthood. As to the second question, why Moses does not call Melchizedek here by his real name Shem, it is sufficient to answer that the sacred writer makes use of the title by which he was better known in that country. We offer these remarks merely to show that this theory which has been adopted by so many eminent ancient and modern scholars is, at least in the absence of a better one, deserving of consideration.

According to Josephus, Melchizedek was a Canaanitish prince, that he was, as the name imports, a righteous king, and that on this account he was made the priest of God. This view of Josephus is adopted by many modern commentators.

"And he gave him a tenth of all," that is a tenth of all the spoils which he had taken from Chedorlaomer and his allies; not as one who had befriended him, but as the servant of God, thus setting his descendants an example how to honour and support those who minister to men in spiritual things. Accordingly we find the laws regulating the giving of tithes carefully laid down in the Mosaic code.

21. *And the King of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the *persons, and take the property to thyself.*

"Give me the persons," i. e., the men and the women who Chedorlaomer had carried away prisoners, but in grateful acknowledgement for the services which Abram had rendered, he requests him to keep the property for himself. This is precisely according to the prevailing custom among the Arabians. If an enemy has made an attack upon an Arab camp, and carried off prisoners and property, if they are afterwards recovered by another party, the prisoners are restored to the owners, but the property is kept by those who have recaptured it.

22. *And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand to the LORD, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth,*

23. *That I will not take from a thread even unto a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take of anything that is thine; and thou shall not say, I have made Abram rich:*

"I have lifted up my hand to the LORD," or, as it may be

*נפש (nephesh) the singular here used collectively.

†After the first: אם (im) the verb אקח (ekkach) must be supplied from the second part. Literally it would read, "If I take," but the particle אם (im) after a formula of an oath assumes the force of a negative particle, thus "I will not take." So also Gen. xlii. 15, By the life of Pharaoh אם תצאו מזה "if ye shall go from this," i. e., "ye shall not go from this," and so in other places.

rendered, "I lift up my hand," the ancient mode of performing an oath by lifting up the right hand. Hence the *right hand* is in Hebrew called יָמִין (*yamin*) from יָמַן (*yaman*), synonymous to אָמַן (*aman*) to be faithful. Hence also the Mohammedan oath, "By the right hand of Allah." "From a thread even unto a shoe-latchet," is an Oriental proverb, meaning *not the most trifling thing*. We see from ch. xii. 16, and ch. xx. 14, that Abram on other occasions took presents from heathen kings, yet he would not accept the least thing belonging to the impious king of Sodom, or to any of his subjects. He looked upon that property as accursed; and the principle that the property of the godless is cursed, and therefore is חֵרֶם (*chorem*) devoted to destruction, pervades throughout the Scriptures. Thus the property of all the idolatrous towns of Canaan taken by the Israelites was to be utterly destroyed. (See Josh. vii. 1.)

24. *Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol and Mamre, let them take their portion.*

But whilst he would not take anything for himself, it was quite proper that the outlay which was incurred for the maintenance of the men during the expedition should be refunded, and that the rights of his allies who have furnished him men should be protected. He left it therefore to their choice to take anything or not, "Let them take their portion," if they are so inclined.

CHAPTER XV.

1. *After these things, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision saying, "Fear not Abram: I am thy shield; thy reward will be very great."*

"After these things," that is, after the occurrences narrated in the preceding chapter, and when Abram had again resumed his peaceful occupation at home. "The word of the LORD" הָיָה (*hayah*) was unto Abram"; this is the first time that the phrase "the word of the LORD" occurs in a divine communication, but is the one commonly employed in Divine revelations made to the prophets. "In a vision", this vision was not in a dream, though it was in the night, for God "brought him forth outside" and bid him look at the stars. "Fear not Abram"; from these words it would appear that although he had returned victorious, there must still have lingered a dread in his mind

of some future danger probably that his vanquished foes might return with a mightier force and overwhelm him. This fear does not appear to have been expressed, but God knoweth the secrets of the heart, and all that is passing there, and hence gives him the assurance, "I am thy shield", that is, I am thy protector, and as I have hitherto shielded thee from thy enemies, so will I continue to be thy defence. מִגֶּן (*magen*) "shield" is in Scripture often metaphorically used as *protector*. Thus the Psalmist says, "But thou, O LORD art a shield for me," i. e. thou art my protector. (Ps. iii. 4, Eng. Version 3.) "Thy reward shall be very great"; i. e. thy reward in believing that God is able to fulfil all his promises.

2. And Abram said Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the *possessor of my house, is Eliezer of Damascus.

"LORD God what wilt Thou give me"; as much as to say, of what use are all earthly goods to me, seeing I am childless, and when I die all my possessions will fall into the hands of a stranger. We can easily imagine that it must have been altogether incomprehensible to the patriarch how the promises, "I will make thee a great nation"; "unto thy seed will I give this land"; and again, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth," were to be fulfilled, as he was already advanced in years, and still had no heir. Nine years had already elapsed since the promise was first made to him, and yet there were no signs of its accomplishment. "Seeing I go childless," i. e., I am going out of the world childless. The verb *to go* is in other places used in the sense *to depart out of the world*. Thus the Psalmist says, "Spare me, that I may recover strength, (or more literally "I may become cheerful,") before I go hence, and I am no more." (Ps. xxxix. 14; Eng. Ver. v. 13.) We have no information how "Eliezer of Damascus" came into the household of Abram, but it is generally supposed, that he was a native of Damascus, and had been purchased as a slave by the patriarch, and that as a reward of good conduct he gave him his freedom, and afterwards on proving himself a most trusty servant, was appointed as steward or overseer of

*"The possessor" is in our passage called בֶּן מֶשֶׁךְ (*ben meshek*) lit. son of possession, i. e. a possessor. By a peculiar Hebrew idiom a person possessing a certain quality is said to be the son of it. Thus בֶּן חַיִּיל (*ben chayil*) lit. a son of strength, i. e. a possessor of strength, a hero, בֶּן עֲוֹלָה (*ben avlah*) lit. son of iniquity, i. e. a possessor of iniquity, a wicked person. מֶשֶׁךְ (*meshek*) is identical with מֶשֶׁךְ (*meshech*) denoting possession, as Job xxviii. 18, the former form is evidently here used to form a paranomasia with דַּמְשֶׁק *Dammasek*.

all his possession. After Abram's death, he would naturally succeed to the property, as there would be no other competitor. Abram was far away from his relatives in Chaldee, and furthermore, he had become altogether estranged from them by difference of religious convictions. As for Lot, he had again taken up his abode among the wicked inhabitants of Sodom. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the pious patriarch should prefer to leave this property to a faithful steward who had so long and well served him. In the Mosaic code by "a statute of judgment," if a man died without leaving a son or daughter, his inheritance passed to the nearest kinsman. But this law applied rather to the landed property of the family than to the personal possessions, and was instituted to secure to every family a certain amount of landed property, and thus prevent individuals from getting too much of the territory into their possession. But Abram had no landed property, and even if he had, no such law existed as yet in his time.

3. *And Abram said, Behold to me Thou hast given no seed : and behold an inmate of my house is my heir.*

"An inmate of my house:" in the Authorized Version it is rendered "one born in my house," and so also in the Revised Version, but this rendering gives rise to an incongruity, for if Eliezer is of Damascus he could not have been born in Abram's house. In the original it reads בן-ביתי (*ben beithi*), lit. *a son of my house*, which means *an inmate*, whilst *one born in my house* would be expressed by יליד ביתי (*yelid beithi*). Compare ch. xiv. 14, xvii. 27.

In answer to Abram's earnest plea, God assures him (v. 4) that his heir should be an offspring of his own body, and in order to impress him with God's omnipotence, and to strengthen his faith in the power of the Almighty to fulfil His promises, however incomprehensible they might be to man, He brought him outside and bid him look up toward heaven with its countless stars and number them. And whilst Abram was contemplating the starry vault of heaven, which proclaims the infinite power of God, He was pleased to repeat the assurance of a numerous progeny to him; as much as to say, not only shalt thou have a son who shall be thy heir, but thy progeny shall be as numerous as these radiant orbs which thou art unable to count.

6. *And he believed in the LORD ; and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*

Who, but "the fool" who says in his heart "there is no God,"

can fail to become impressed with the boundless omnipotence of the Almighty when looking upwards to the starry heavens. And yet not more than a thousand stars can be distinguished in the clearest winter night by the naked eye. Millions have been discovered by means of the telescope, but as it is probable that by far the greater part lie beyond the reach of the best glasses which have been, or ever will be, constructed by man, the real number of stars may be assumed to be beyond all human calculation or conception. The glorious sight, whilst contemplating the numberless shining orbs, made the Psalmist exclaim :

"When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained ;
Then I say, What is man that thou art mindful of him ?
And the son of man that thou visitest him ?"

And it was this glorious sight which now also fully impressed Abram with the infinite power of God to be able to perform all that He had promised. "And he believed in the LORD," although utterly improbable as the declaration must have appeared at his advanced age and the advanced age of Sarai his wife, and the confiding faith, God accounted to him for righteousness as an acceptable and praiseworthy act.

7. *And he said to him, I AM the LORD who have brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.*

8. *And he said, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it ?*

Many commentators have regarded Abram's question, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it ?" as an expression of doubt, but such a view is altogether inconsistent with the statement in verse 6, where it is said that Abram believed in the LORD, and that his faith "was accounted to him for righteousness." The question simply implies an earnest desire for more information or distinct knowledge of the matter. The language here differs also somewhat from that employed in the previous promises. In ch. xii. 7 we read, "Unto thy seed will I give this land"; and in ch. xiii. 15, "To thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever"; but here it is only said, "to give thee this land to inherit it." Hence we see that God, so far from reproving him for asking for the information, graciously gratifies his desire.

9. *And He said to him, Take for Me a heifer three years old, and a she-goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.*

10. *And he took for Him all those and divided them in the midst and laid the piece of each against its other half, but the birds he did not divide.*

"Take for Me," i. e., offer for Me, and is so rendered in the Chaldee Version, "offer before me." The creatures which Abram is here commanded to offer comprised the same pure animals which were afterwards appointed for sacrifice, under the Mosaic law. The birds not being divided was likewise in accordance with the ritual law afterwards instituted (Lev. i. 17.) This sacrifice was, therefore, typical of the sacrifice which was afterwards to be offered when the promise made to Abram was consummated. Under the Mosaic law the animals were generally offered when one year old, but on this solemn occasion they were to be of the age of three years, they being then in a perfect state, neither too young nor too old. Some of the Patriarchal writers explain "the three years" age of the animals as foreshadowing the three generations of Israel which were to serve in Egypt, or the three centuries of captivity in a foreign land. This supposition is also favoured by Delitzsch and others, but according to verses 13, 16, the bondage lasted a longer time. The ceremony of dividing animals into two halves in concluding a covenant, and between which the contracting parties passed, was observed among many ancient nations; and Ephraim, the celebrated Syrian divine, relates that the Chaldeans still practised it in his time, namely, in the 10th century of the Christian era. The parties interested intimidated by this ceremony that they deserved to be so killed if they violated the covenant. (See Hom. Il. ii. 124; iii. 291-301. Virg. Æn. 640. Liv. i. 94, xl. 6.) It is most likely that the heathens adopted the custom from the Hebrews, and not the Hebrews from the heathens, as some of our modern commentators will have it. It is certainly altogether improbable that God would command Abram to perform a ceremony which was practised by the surrounding idolatrous nations, when we find afterwards such great care taken to guard against the Hebrews adopting any ceremonial acts performed by the heathens. Thus, for example, it was a common custom among Medes and some other eastern nations, for parties making an agreement to cut their arms, and lick up one another's blood. (Herod. i. 14.) A similar repulsive practice prevailed among the Armenians. (Tac. Am. xii. 47.) The Hebrews, on the contrary, were directly forbidden to make any incisions in the body. As to drinking human blood, such an act they would have looked upon with the greatest horror, since even the eating of the blood of animals was visited with the most fearful Divine judgments. (Lev. xvii. 10.)

From the custom of dividing animals originated the phrase *כרת ברית* (*carath berith*) to cut a covenant, i. e., to make a covenant, so frequently used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

11. *And the birds of prey came down upon the carcases, but Abram drove them away.*

"The birds of prey" which are here represented rapaciously swooping down upon the carcases, symbolize the Egyptians and other enemies of the Hebrews, who by their cruel oppression would seek to exterminate them. The reader will remember, that Pharaoh commanded all the male children of the Hebrews to be destroyed. "But Abram drove them away." This prefigures that his faith would preserve his posterity from destruction. Though the Israelites were often "brought low for their iniquity," yet for Abram's sake God remembered for them His covenant. (Psalm cv.)

12. *And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, a terror of great darkness fell upon him.*

On comparing this verse with verse 5, it will be seen that a whole day elapsed between the occurrences related in the two verses. The occurrence spoken of in verse 5, took place whilst the stars were yet visible, whilst the one narrated in our verse happened when the sun was about to set. The intermediate time was occupied by Abram in preparing the victims, and watching them until it pleased God to manifest Himself. Some writers suppose that this interval of time may typify *the time between the promise made in the vision and its fulfilment*. "A deep sleep," Hebrew תרדמה (*tardemah*), a supernatural sleep; the word is employed in Gen. ii. 21, "And the LORD GOD caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam." (See also 1 Sam. xxvi. 12.) The supernatural sleep was here accompanied by "a terror of great darkness;" and we learn from other portions of Scripture, that similar over-powering influences upon the mind and body sometimes accompanied Divine communications. (Compare Job iv. 13, 14, *et seq.* Dan. viii. 27: x 8.) The going down of the sun, prefigured to Abram the withdrawal of the sun of grace from his posterity on account of the frequent forgetfulness of the covenant; and the great darkness accompanied by intense mental distress, were no doubt emblematical of the suffering and distress which the Israelites brought upon themselves from time to time by their rejecting the commandments of God, and their proneness to idolatry.

13. *And He said to Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed will be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they will afflict them four hundred years.*

14. *But that nation also, whom they shall serve, I will judge: and afterwards they will go out with great substance.*

15. *But thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace ; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.*

16. *And in the fourth generation they shall return hither : for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.*

It was while Abram was in this supernatural sleep that God delivered to him the prophecy of the servitude of his descendants in Egypt. "And they will afflict them four hundred years." This statement gives rise to several difficulties if compared with other portions of the sacred narrative, which our rationalistic writers have not been slow to point to as evident contradictions. In the first place, according to Exod. xii. 40, "the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelled in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years." To reconcile the difference of these two dates it is only necessary to state that the 400 years in our passage date from the birth of Isaac, which took place 25 years after the call of Abram, so that from this event to the deliverance from the Egyptian bondage was 405 years, and here given in round numbers as 400 years. In the second place, we are confronted with the question, whether the 430 years are to be regarded as actual servitude in Egypt? There are some writers who insist upon 430 years actual dwelling in Egypt, but we must say that they do not do so without creating insurmountable difficulties. These will at once become apparent from the following remarks. In the first place, St. Paul distinctly dates the 430 years from the promise to Abram to the giving of the law (Gal. iii. 16, 17). Secondly, the period of 430 oppression could hardly be reconciled with the genealogy in Exod. vi., and Num. xxvii. 1. Thirdly, it appears from Num. xxvi. 59, that Jochebed, the mother of Moses, was the daughter of Levi. Now even if we allow that she was born to him when 137 years old, that is the last year of his life, it follows that, if the sojourn in Egypt was 430 years, Moses, who was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus, must have been born 350 years after Jacob went down into Egypt, and his mother must, at least, have been 256 years old when Moses was born, which would imply an absurdity. There can, therefore, be no doubt that the 430 years must be reckoned from the call of Abram when he still lived at Haran, which, according to the following dates, would reduce the number to 215 years of actual residence in Egypt :

From the call of Abram to the birth of Isaac, (compare	
Gen. xii. 4, xxi. 5).....	25 years.
From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, (see Gen.	
xxv. 26).....	60 years.
From the birth of Jacob to his emigration into Egypt	130 years.
Making a total of.....	215 years.

This agrees likewise with the Septuagint version, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, which insert in Exod. xii. 40, after "in Egypt," the words "and in Canaan." This reading is also found in the Alexandrian codex of the Septuagint. In the Targum of Jonathan the verse is paraphrased, "and the days which the children of Israel stayed in Egypt were thirty times seven years, that is 210 years; but 430 years had elapsed from the time, when God spoke to Abraham, on the first day of Nisan, between the dissected parts of the animals." With this agrees also the statement of Josephus, who says: "They left Egypt in the month Xanthicus, on the fifteenth day of the lunar month; four hundred and thirty years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but two hundred and fifteen years only after our forefathers came into Egypt." (Ant. b. ii. xv., par. 2). It must, however, not be inferred from the readings given in these versions that the Hebrew text has been corrupted, they simply afford an explanation of the numeral in the sacred text, a practice which they frequently adopt where the original is not quite clear and liable to be misconstrued. This was evidently the prevailing mode of reckoning the 430 years among the ancient Hebrews, it was adopted also by some of the Patristic writers, and afterwards by some of the most eminent Jewish and Christian commentators. "And in the fourth generation they shall return hither"; it is evident from the context that the four generations are equivalent to the four hundred years in verse 23.

The truth is, the primary meaning of the Hebrew word דֹר (dor) is *revolution*, hence *a revolving period of time, an age, or generation*. During the long lived patriarchal ages, a generation seems to have been computed at *one hundred years, at a later period of time, however, the Israelites seem to have reckoned the duration of a generation, as is now done with us, from thirty to forty years.

But even the 215 years cannot be taken as the time of actual servitude, for the oppression of the Israelites only commenced after the death of Joseph, when a new king ascended upon the throne of Egypt, "which knew not Joseph." (Exod. i. 8). Now, according to Calmet's chronological table, Jacob went down into Egypt 2298 A. M., and the new king who knew not Joseph ascended the throne 2427, thus we have an interval of 129 years between these two events, during which the Israelites were not oppressed. According to the same chronological table Moses was born six years after the ascending of the new king upon

* So among the Romans the word *seculum* originally denoted an age or generation of men, but afterwards acquired also the secondary signification of a century. (See Censorin de Die natali, c. 17).

the throne, and Moses was, according to Exod. vii. 7, "four score years old" at the time of the Exodus, accordingly the whole period of oppression was only 86 years out of the 215 years of the dwelling in Egypt. But it will be asked, does not our passage distinctly declare that "they will afflict them four hundred years?" According to the accentuation of the passage in the English version it certainly does say so, but on referring to the original it will be seen from the accentuation, that the words וַעֲבַדְהֶם וַעֲנֶה אֹתָם (*va'avadum weinnu otham*), "and thy shall serve them, and they shall afflict them," are to be considered parenthetical, so that the passage without these words would read, "know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs four hundred years." The words thus parenthetically introduced merely conveyed to Abram the information that his descendants were to be oppressed, but not as to the precise time that the oppression was to last. "They shall come out with great riches;" in these words God gives the patriarch the assurance of His continual watchfulness over them. Though in His infinite wisdom He allowed them for wise purposes to be afflicted for some time, yet they were not to serve that strange nation who had no claim to their service for nothing, they were in due time to be rewarded for their hard labour, and leave their land of bondage with great substance. (See more on this subject "Introduction," vol. i. p. liii. *et seq.*) "But thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace." In this passage we have the immortality of the soul distinctly indicated.

It may well be asked, what else can our passage mean than that he should meet his fathers in the blessed abode of the departed spirits? If the existence of his "fathers" had ceased with their returning into dust in the grave, the words in the passage most assuredly would altogether be meaningless. It will be observed that the return of the soul to his fathers, is altogether separated from the burying of the body. We have here two distinct statements. But where did they exist? Surely not in the grave. The only place then where this reunion could possibly take place was in שְׁאוֹל *sheol*, i. e., the abode or realm of the departed spirits. It is quite evident that the expressions, "thou shalt come to thy fathers," "he was gathered to his people," (ch. xxv. 8) cannot mean *he was buried with his people*, for in verse 9, it is stated that his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, which was in the land of Canaan, (compare ch. xlix. 30,) whilst all his fathers died and were buried in Mesopotamia. It is, indeed, surprising, that with passages like these and similar other ones before them, there should yet be found some writers, who will persist in holding that there is no allusion in the Old Testament to the

doctrine of the immortality of the soul. "For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete;" here we have the reason assigned why the fulfilment of the promise is delayed. The wickedness of the Canaanites was indeed great, but God is merciful and long suffering, and slow to anger. He affords these impious people ample time and every opportunity to turn from their wicked ways. But Divine justice demands that wickedness must be sooner or later punished. Our passage entirely disarms the opponents of Scripture who are persistently bringing forward the conquest of Canaan and the treatment to which its inhabitants were subjected by the Israelites as acts of cruelty and injustice. It is surprising that such men as Dr. Kuenen, Dr. Hooykas, Dr. Oort, and some other well known interpreters of Scripture should take such a one-sided view of this subject, looking merely at the punishment, without inquiring whether that punishment was not well merited. The Canaanites themselves were not the first inhabitants of the land, they took possession of the country after having exterminated most of the earlier tribes the Anakim, Rephaim, and Enim. During the five centuries that elapsed from Abraham to Joshua, they were permitted to increase and enjoy all the gifts that a most fertile country could bestow, and it was not until their cup of iniquity was overflowing that God delivered them into the hands of the Hebrews. (See more on this subject Introduction vol. i. p. cii. *et seq.*) But it will be asked why are the Amorites only mentioned in our passage, and not any of the other tribes of Canaan? This may probably be accounted for by the Amorites being the most powerful of all the tribes of the country, they are here employed as the representatives of all the Canaanites. So again, Deut. i. 20.

17. *And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flame of fire that passed between those pieces.*

The chief part of the ceremony in concluding the covenant is described in this verse. The presence of the Almighty is manifested under the symbol of "a smoking furnace, and a flame of fire." In a similar manner He afterwards manifested Himself to the children of Israel in a pillar and cloud of fire. The rendering of the Hebrew word "תַּנּוּר" (*tannur*) "furnace" renders the passage somewhat ambiguous, though this rendering cannot well be avoided for want of a more suitable term. What is really meant here is, a kind of portable oven, much in use among the Orientals. It is an earthen vessel about three feet high, and is placed upon a support. Fire is made inside, and when the sides are sufficiently heated, thin

layers of paste are spread on the sides which are quickly baked. The word occurs fifteen times in the Old Testament, and only in this instance and in three other places is it rendered by "furnace" in the Authorized Version; in all the other places it is translated "oven." The proper Hebrew word for a *smelting furnace* is כּוּר (cur.) (Compare Prov. xvii. 3; Ezek. xxii. 18-22.) And this word is always employed wherever the people are metaphorically spoken of as having been cast into the furnace, as Ezek. xx. 18-22; or delivered out of the furnace, as Deut. iv. 20; 1 Kings viii. 51; Jer. xi. 4. The furnace, therefore, in our passage cannot symbolize the affliction of the Israelites in Egypt as has been explained by so many commentators, and is not parallel to "iron furnace" in Deut. iv. 20, where כּוּר (cur) is used. We have already stated, that in concluding a covenant between two or more parties, all that were a party to it went through the divided pieces, but from the nature of this covenant, God alone passed through in a representative symbol, for it was He alone that made a pledge, Abram was only the recipient of the promise that God would finally establish his seed in the promised land.

18. *On that same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying "To thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."*

By the passing of the furnace and flame of fire between the divided pieces, the promise was ratified, and the LORD now makes over the promised land as by a deed of gift to Abram. "To thy seed have I given this land," the Rabbinic writers very properly remark, "He does not say, 'I will give,' but 'I have given,' and yet Abraham was as yet childless, but because the word of the holy blessed God is a deed, therefore he speaketh thus." In this covenant, the extent of the promised land is materially enlarged. In the preceding promises the land of Canaan was only given, (see xii. 7; xiii. 14-17; xv. 7); but here the boundaries are promised to reach in the south to "the river of Egypt" and in the east to "the river Euphrates." The territory of the Hebrews was to comprise all the country between these two rivers. Hence among the ten nations enumerated in the following verses which the Hebrews were to conquer, three of them have never been mentioned before. By נהר מצרים (*nehar Mitsrayim*) "river of Egypt," is unquestionably meant the Nile, and not the נחל מצרים (*nachal Mitsrayim*) "brook of Egypt, i. e., the Wadi el-Arish," mentioned in Num. xxxiv. 5; Josh. xv. 4; on the confines of Egypt and Palestine, and which flows into the Mediterranean. As the history of the Hebrews nowhere gives any indication of

their territory having at any time reached to the Nile, some commentators have indeed been led to interpret "the river of Egypt" in our verse to mean the *brook of Egypt*, and not the Nile. But this supposition is altogether erroneous, such an insignificant little stream or brook as the *Wadi-el-Arish*, would not be called נָהָר (*nahar*) a river. In Isa. xxvii. 12; and Jer. ii. 18, the river Nile and Euphrates are again mentioned as the extreme boundaries of the possession of the Israelites. That the Hebrews did not occupy all the territory which God here assigned for a possession to Abram's seed, must be ascribed to their inactivity or neglect to do so. They even permitted some of the heathen tribes to occupy large portions of Canaan, although they had been commanded to drive them out. (Exod. xxiii. 31).

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children; and she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.*

Ten years had now elapsed since Abram first had received the promise, and although he was still childless, and already advanced in years, yet his faith was so firm that notwithstanding the apparent improbabilities of having a lineal heir he did not doubt but that the Almighty, who can control the laws of nature, would, in his appointed time, surely fulfil the promise. It was, however, different with Sarai, who apparently could not bring herself to believe that she should become a mother at her advanced age, and, therefore, concluded if the promise was to be fulfilled, it must be through some other person than herself. She accordingly resolved to give her Egyptian handmaid to her husband to be his wife, saying: אֶלַי אִבְנָה מִמֶּנָּה (*ulai ibbaneh mimmennah*) literally, "perhaps I may build up a family by her." Now, however, repulsive the conduct of Sarai may appear to us, yet it was quite in accordance with the widely prevailing custom in the East, and it is, therefore, simply absurd on the part of some of our modern commentators to judge of the act by the existing customs of our times. We have precisely a parallel case in Rachel giving her handmaid Bilhah to Jacob to wife. (Gen. xxx. 3.) The proposal came from the legal wife, to whom then the children were considered to belong. This will also account for Abram readily consenting, as our text implies, "And Abram

"listened to the voice of Sarai," it being her own wish, and in accordance with the prevailing custom of the age, he saw nothing wrong in the proposal.

Sarai probably had brought Hagar with her from Egypt, who seems to have been her chief maid-servant, just as Eliezer was the chief man-servant of Abram. As the name *הָגָר* (*Hagar*) is a purely Hebrew name denoting *flight*, it can hardly have been her original name, but was, no doubt, later bestowed upon her on account of her *flight* from Abram's house. We have had already occasion to show that it was no uncommon practice among the Hebrews to bestow names having reference to some remarkable incident in the lives of individuals. Among the Mussulmans Hagar is held in great veneration. They call her "mother Hagar," and maintain that she was Abram's lawful wife, and that Ishmael, as the eldest son, obtained therefore the extensive tracts of Arabia, which, in their estimation far surpass both in extent and riches, the limited territory of Canaan which the younger son Isaac received. From Hagar descended the Hagarites *הַגְרִימִים* (*Hagriim*) mentioned. (1 Chron. v. 10, 19, 20.)

3. *And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar, her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelled ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.*

According to this verse the ceremony of giving in marriage was literally performed by Sarai. She took Hagar and gave her to Abram to be his wife. Such secondary wives, although regarded as of an inferior rank, were still considered as real wives, and their position was not looked upon as degrading. Their children, however did not inherit the property of the father, if he had sons by the real wife, but they were generally provided for during the father's life time. Abram was now 85 years old when Hagar was given him to wife, and Sarai was 75 years old. It was not long before Sarai had cause to regret her action. Little did she think that the honor which she conferred on her Egyptian maid would be the cause of seriously disturbing the domestic peace which had hitherto reigned in her household. But so it was. Hagar, instead of being grateful for what her mistress had done for her, assumed now an insolent demeanour towards her, she despised her benefactress, forgetting that although she was Abram's wife, she was still a bondswoman, (see ch. xxi. 10) and still subject to her mistress. Solomon gives as one of the four intolerable things under which the earth trembles, "an handmaid that is heir to her mistress," i.e., a handmaid when she supplants her mistress in the affections of her husband. (Prov. xxx. 23.) It is

important that the reader should bear in mind the reprehensible conduct of Hagar towards Sarai, for there are many who take altogether a one-sided view of the subject, bestowing all the commiseration on the former, and laying all the blame on the latter. Sarai's ill treatment of Hagar may be deserving of censure, but she certainly had great provocation.

6. *But Abram said to Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hands do unto her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai afflicted (or humbled) her, she fled from her face.*

The ill-feeling that sprung up between Sarai and her maid, placed Abram in a very perplexing situation, and must have caused the good patriarch intense grief, especially, as Sarai imagined herself wronged by him as well as by Hagar. Abram's reply to his wife's excited complaints, however, was calm, gentle, and at the same time just, tending at once to convince her that his affections had not been estranged from her: "Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do unto her as it pleaseth thee," as much as to say thou art her mistress, and, therefore, she is entirely under thy control, and although thou hast given her to me to wife, that does not release her from thy authority. This reply shows that he regarded Sarai as the only mistress of his house, and that she had the first claim to his affections. In the absence of more information, it is impossible to form any just idea whether Sarai's treatment of her maid may not have been too severe and unwarrantable, but be that as it may, Hagar evidently either could or would no longer put up with her mistress's ill treatment, and fled from her presence, no doubt intending to return to Egypt.

7. *And the *angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.*

Hagar's path in returning to her native country led from Hebron through the desert of Shur, and is the same which in Numbers xxxiii. 8 is called "the desert of Etham." The common caravan road between Palestine and Egypt still runs through the heart of this desert. Whilst on her way to a place called "Shur"—from which probably the desert received

* The Hebrew term for angel is מַלְאָךְ (*malach*) literally a messenger. The root לָאָךְ (*laach*) is obsolete in Hebrew, but in Arabic and Ethiopic denotes to send, in the latter also to serve, to minister. Hence it is employed indifferently to a human agent or messenger, as 2 Sam. ii. 5, xi. 19; to a prophet, Hag. i. 13; to a priest, Mal. ii. 7; and to celestial spirits. Our term angel is derived from the Greek ἄγγελος which like the Hebrew word also denotes a messenger, or as it is translated in some of our old Bibles a tidings-bringer. St. Augustine has very properly remarked, *nomen non nature, sed officii*, "it is a name, not of nature, but of office."

its name—on the confines of the desert, being overcome by fatigue, she seated herself by a fountain. We can easily picture to ourselves, that thus circumstanced, a lonely wanderer in the vast dreary desert, exposed to the fierce heat of the sun, still far away from her native land, and no kindly hand near to protect her in case of danger, the mind of Hagar must have been exercised with the most painful emotions. At this moment of Hagar's utmost extremity, when no pitying eye beheld the sorrowing fugitive save that of Him who watches over the destitute, "the angel of the LORD appeared to her and relieved her dreadful anxiety." "The angel of the LORD" is, according to verse 13, God Himself. "And she called the name of the LORD, who spake to her." So again ch. xxii., 11, 15, 16; and also Exodus iii., 2, "And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire;" but in verse 4 we read: "And when the LORD saw that he went thither to see, God called to him out of the midst of the bush." So again, Judges vi., 11: "The angel of the LORD appeared unto Gideon," but according to verse 14 it was God Himself. And so in other places in the Old Testament. Indeed, some Oriental translators always employ "the angel of God," instead of Jehovah, whenever Jehovah is spoken of as appearing on earth.

8. *And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence didst thou come? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from my mistress Sarai.*

Although omniscient, the angel asked her whence she came and whither she was going. The question was a suitable introduction to the message to be delivered. And further, hearing herself familiarly called by her name, and her occupation specified, would naturally tend to allay any fear that the sudden appearance of a stranger in that lonely place may have caused her, for she must either have inferred from it that he was a person who had previously known her, or that he must be a superhuman being. The communication afterwards made to her soon convinced her that the latter was the case.

9. *And the angel of the LORD said unto her, return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.*

10. *And the angel of the LORD said to her I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.*

"Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself." By this direction the angel, before he delivered the joyful tidings which would fill her with rapture, desired to impress upon her first that her conduct in despising her mistress had been wrong, that as she was still Sarai's maid she was in duty bound to

return and to submit to her rightful authority. It was also to teach her that it was only for Abraham's sake, whose wife she was, that there was such a great future in store for her descendants. "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly:" such a declaration can only be made by the Deity, and clearly shows that "the angel of the Lord" is God Himself.

This promise of an innumerable progeny was speedily fulfilled in the rapid increase of Ishmael's direct descendants. Isaac, his favoured brother, had only two sons, Jacob and Esau, whilst Ishmael had twelve sons, who became princes and gave their names to as many tribes (Gen. xxv. 13, 14, 15, 16). About 170 years after this declaration to Hagar, the sons of Jacob amounted to *twelve*, whilst the descendants of Ishmael had so rapidly increased as to form a trading nation. At the time when Joseph's brethren were conspiring to take his life, "a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels laden with spicery, balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." (Genes. xxxvii. 25.)

11. *And the angel of the LORD said to her, Behold, thou art with child, *and shalt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.*

12. *And he will be a wild ass of a man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell before the face of all his brethren.*

Hagar was enjoined to call her son יִשְׁמָעֵאל (*Yishmael*), Ishmael, i. e., *God heareth*, because God "hath heard," that is, hath heeded her affliction.

From this Hagar could not fail to learn, that God is no respecter of person, that His care extends to the slave as well as to the master. "And he will be a wild ass of a man." Under this figurative language, the character of Ishmael, and more particularly that of his descendants the Bedouins, is most powerfully and truthfully depicted. Nothing could be more descriptive of the wandering, lawless, freebooting life of these children of the desert than by comparing them to the indomitable wild ass. In the book of Job there is a beautiful and graphic description of the animal.

* יִלְדָּה, evidently instead of יִלְדֶּה part. fem., like ch. xviii. 19, Is. vii.

14. This irregular form occurs again, Judg. xiii. 5. Some writers regard the peculiar form of the word as a compound of two tenses, implying time, *present and future*, and equivalent to 'thou shalt very shortly bear.'

Who hath sent out the wild ass free?
 Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?
 Whose house I have made the wilderness;
 And *the salt steppe his dwelling place,
 He scorneth the tumult of the city,
 The shoutings of the driver he heedeth not,
 The range of the mountains is his pasture,
 And he searcheth after every green thing.—(Job xxxix. 5-8.)

The wild ass surpasses in fleetness the swiftest horse, and resembles the latter in gracefulness. It delights in its native deserts, and is remarkable for its capability of enduring both hunger and thirst. Travellers observe, that they often heard Arabs say, that it is altogether untameable. It is hunted as game, and its flesh is by the Orientals regarded as a great delicacy, European travellers, however, do not seem to relish it.

The prediction was literally fulfilled, even as it regarded Ishmael himself. When he was seventeen years old, he and his mother were expelled from Abram's dwelling. Hagar intended to return to Egypt, but losing her way she wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba, and afterwards retired into the wilderness of Paran, where she took up her abode in the neighbourhood of Sinai. Ishmael became an expert bow-man, and his mother married him to a country woman of her own. Inured to hardships at his early age, his mind acquired fierceness from solitude, and his body grew robust. He soon acquired influence over the native tribes, and rose to great authority among them, And as regards his posterity the Bedouins, the analogy between their habits and mode of life; and those of the wild ass is equally as striking, if indeed not more so. God himself has *sent them out free*; He has *loosed* them from all political restraint. The wilderness is their home, and the barren land, where no other human beings could live, is their dwelling. They are swift like the wild ass, and therefore not easily caught, They scorn the city, and have no fixed habitation: the tent that is pitched in the evening is struck in the morning. When they make depredations on cities or towns, they retire into the wilderness with such precipitancy that all pursuit is eluded, and thus it may be said *they heed not the shoutings of the driver*. They cultivate no lands, but *the range of the mountains is their pasture*. They have occupied the same country, and maintained the same mode of life since the day of their great progenitor. Civilization has never imprinted her foot on their barren soil. "His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Such has

*The "salt steppe" i. e., the most barren steppe, for *salt* is the symbol of *barrenness*, (Compare Ps. cvii. 34; Jud. ix. 45; Virg. Geo. 2, 238.) "He scorneth the tumult of the city;" the wild ass delights in the undisturbed freedom, far away from the habitation of man.

precisely been the case with Ishmael's posterity, from the earliest period of their history and it continues at the present time. "In the desert everybody is everybody's foe," is their proverbial saying. Burekhardt, who probably had more intimate acquaintance with the Arab tribes than any other eastern traveller, speaks of them as "a people of robbers; that is to say, everything which they can lay hold on in the open country is their lawful prize." (Trav. p. 640.) Dr. Shaw, who can speak from experience, having been plundered himself, observes: "The Arabs are naturally thievish and treacherous; and it sometimes happens that those very persons are overtaken and pillaged in the morning, who were entertained the night before, with all the instances of friendship and hospitality." (Travels.) Belzoni, who had frequent opportunities of observing the Bedquins, represents them as "being even in perpetual warfare with each other; their thoughts are incessantly employed in improving their arts of defence, or in obtaining plunder. (Travels, p. 149.) Mr. Paxton remarks, "They have occupied the same country, and followed the same mode of life, from the day of their great ancestor, down to the present times, and range the wide extent of burning sands which separates them from all surrounding nations, as rude and savage, and untractable as the wild ass himself. Claiming the barren plains of Arabia, as the patrimonial domain assigned by God to the founder of their nation, they considered themselves entitled to seize, and appropriate to their own use, whatever they can find there. Impatient of restraint and jealous of their liberty, they form no connection with the neighbouring states, they admit of little or no friendly intercourse, but live in a state of continual hostility with the rest of the world. Mounted on their favourite horses, they scour the waste in search of plunder, with a velocity surpassed only by the wild ass. They levy contributions on every person who happens to fall in their way, and frequently rob their own countrymen, with as little scruple as they do a stranger or an enemy; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand against them."

"He shall dwell in the face of his brethren" the meaning evidently is, that the descendants of Ishmael should always maintain their independence, that all attempts to conquer them would prove fruitless. Some writers take the expression "his brethren" in a restricted sense, meaning "the other descendants of Abram, namely, the Hebrews, Edomites, Midianites, &c.," whilst others take it in a larger sense, and understand by it mankind in general. The latter supposition is decidedly preferable. From the earliest period of their history they have maintained their independence, notwithstanding

the repeated efforts that have been made to destroy them. God preserves this people a lasting monument of His providential care, and as an incontestible proof of the truth of His word. Even the author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," who enlisted in the ranks of infidelity, bears unintentionally testimony to the fulfilment of the prophecy contained in our passage. After describing the result of the wars carried on by the Abyssinians, the Persians, the Sultans of Egypt, the Romans and the Turks, against the descendants of Ishmael, in the partial success of these nations, he adds: "Yet these exceptions are *temporary and local*; the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia; the present sovereign of the Turks may exercise a *shadow* of jurisdiction, but his pride is reduced to solicit the friendship of a people whom it is dangerous to provoke, and fruitless to attack." (Decline and Fall, vol. ix. p. 230.) Such is the character of the descendants of Ishmael, as is fully attested by the most eminent historians and travellers, and every candid reader must admit, that it in every particular coincides with the prediction concerning them in our verse. Let it be remembered that the Bedouins are the only people known whose manners and mode of life have remained unchanged, and who follow the pursuits and possess the dispositions which characterize them in the ancient prophecy. And let it also be borne in mind that, whilst the descendants of Ishmael retained their original wandering mode of life, and are still maintaining their independence, the descendants of his brother Isaac had formed themselves into a powerful commonwealth, yet have been subdued by various nations, their cities laid waste, and they themselves dispersed among all the nations of the world. It has, therefore, been well remarked, "could any sagacity have foreseen so decided a difference between the dispositions, and pursuits, and fortunes, of the two branches of a family, whose dwelling place was in the same quarter of the globe? Every candid and ingenuous mind will answer, no! And with such minds we leave the decision; only expressing our opinion, that had we no other argument to offer for the authenticity of the Pentateuch, than what is afforded by the prophecy in question, with the character of Ishmael's descendants, this alone would be amply sufficient for the purpose of convincing the most incredulous mind." In the Authorized Version פֶּרֶא אָדָם (*pere-Adam*), is freely rendered "a wild man," instead of "a wild ass of a man," the translators have followed the rendering of the Septuagint as *αγριος ανθρωπος*, a *wild man*, which, however, destroys the beauty of the passage, and deprives it of much of

its force. In the Revised Version it is rendered "a wild ass among men," which rendering is also given in the Chaldee Version.

13. *And she called the name of the LORD that spoke to her, Thou art the God of seeing; for she said, Do I even here see after seeing, (or after the vision.)*

From the positive and distinct manner with which the assurances were made to Hagar, she became convinced that they were utterances of a superhuman being, and "called the name of the LORD that spoke to her: 'Thou art the God of seeing;'" that is, the God who suffers Himself to be seen. The narrative does not leave us to conjecture why she gave that name, but immediately gives us the reason, for she said, "Do I even here see," or as some render, "Do I even still see after seeing," as much as to say, *do I not still live and see after having seen God?* Having reference to the general belief that no human being can see God and live. (Compare Exod. xx. 19; Deut. xviii. 16; Judg. vi. 22, 23.) It is an expression of devout and grateful surprise at being permitted to continue to live after having seen the symbol of the Divine presence. In the Authorized Version, the Hebrew phrase **אַתָּה אֵל רֹאִי** (*attah el roi*) is rendered "thou God seest me," i. e., thou seest and takest compassion on me, the translators have adopted the rendering of the Septuagint **ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἐπιδῶν με**, and the Vulgate *qui vidisti me*; but the Hebrew word **רֹאִי** (*roi*) rendered "seest me" is an *abstract noun*, and does not admit of such a rendering, for that would require **רֹאִי** (*roeni*.) In the Revised Version, "God of seeing" is given "in the margin."

14. *Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kedesh and Bered.*

In commemoration of the great event of having been permitted to see the symbol of God and continue in life, she called the well **בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי** (*Beer-lachai-roi*) "well of the seeing alive," or as some render it "well of seeing God and living."

* **רֹאִי** (*roi*) sight or vision from **רָאָה** (*raah*) to see, like **חֲלִי** (*choli*) sickness, from **חָלָה** (*chalah*) to be sick; **עֲנִי** (*oni*) affliction, from **עָנָה** (*anah*) to suffer, to be afflicted; and other nouns of this form.

CHAPTER XVII.

1. *And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be perfect.*

Thirteen years had elapsed since the birth of Ishmael recorded in verses fifteen and sixteen of the preceding chapter, and Abram had now attained to the age of ninety-nine years, and the covenant made with him fifteen years ago remained still unaccomplished. He had indeed now a son, but it was the son of a foreign hand-maid, and although Sarah had not been mentioned in any of the promises hitherto made, the patriarch would naturally have expected that the promised blessings would be realized through her. Abram's faith had therefore been put to the severest test. But God's appointed time for the fulfilment of the covenant was now drawing near, and He appeared again unto the faithful patriarch, this time to prepare him for its execution. And here it is worthy of notice that whilst at the establishment of the covenant, ch. xv., 7, God made himself known to Abram as יהוה יהוה *Jehovah, the self-existing Being*. "I am יהוה who brought thee out of Ur," here He announces Himself as אֵל שַׁדַּי (*el shaddai*), "God Almighty." This was evidently designed to impress upon Abram that although the announcement which is now to be made may appear to him as involving an impossibility, with the all-powerful God there is nothing impossible, that no obstacles however great can stand in the way in accomplishing His promises. We have here also to notice another remarkable difference between the covenant in ch. xv. and the covenant of this chapter. In chapter xv. the promises were made unconditional, no duties were imposed upon the patriarch, but made as a reward for his faith; but in this chapter where the promises are renewed and enlarged upon, and the time of the promised heir distinctly specified (verse 21), Abram is placed under certain obligations. The first obligation is, "walk before Me, and be perfect." The command is brief, but could not possibly be more explicit. The Hebrew word תָּמִים (*tamim*) is very expressive; it denotes *innocent, blameless, upright*. The con-

*שַׁדַּי (*Shaddai*) is evidently derived from שָׁדַד (*shadad*), to be powerful, having the ending יָ (ai) which occurs with some proper names, הַגַּי *Haggai*, סִינַי *Sinai*, &c. Vetringa, whom Gesenius and others follow, regard the form the word as *pluralis majestaticus*, but the ending יָ (ai) as a plural form is too uncertain to warrant such a supposition.

tinuance of the covenant was conditional on his leading a blameless life. The second obligation is the observance of the rite of circumcision (verses 10-11.)

4. *As for me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of a multitude of nations.*

5. *And thy name shall no more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham; for I have constituted thee the father of a multitude of nations.*

"As for me," in the original, merely **אני** (*ani*), "I," introduces with particular emphasis the promises which follow, whilst in verse 9 **וְאַתָּה** (*weattah*), "but thou," i. e., "as for thee," introduces the obligation which was imposed upon Abraham, as much as to say, whilst I, on My part, will most assuredly keep My promises, it will be obligatory on thy part to "keep My covenant, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations." "And thou shalt be a father of a multitude of nations;" this, of course, must be understood as referring to his *spiritual posterity*. (Compare Rom. iv. 11-17.) The twelve sons of Jacob founded only the Hebrew nation so that according to this, Abraham could only be said to have been the lineal father of *one nation*. And even if we were to include the tribes that sprung from his children by Keturah, and those that descended from Ishmael, Abraham could hardly be said to have been "the father of a multitude of nations." It is therefore evident that the passage must be understood as embracing all true believers of all ages and all countries. This is further evident from the fact, that circumcision, the sign of the covenant, was not restricted to his lineal descendants, but "he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed," (v. 12) was to be circumcised, and were thus admitted into the fellowship of the covenant. Another remarkable feature in the renewal of the covenant here, is the change of name both of Abram and his wife. According to the renewed promise Abram is to be a father of a multitude of nations, and kings are to issue from him, hence his name **אַבְרָם** Abram, i. e., (*exalted father*), was changed to **אַבְרָהָם** Abraham, i. e., *exalted father of multitude*, as a tangible

*The name **אַבְרָהָם** (*Avraham*), Abraham, seems to be formed from **אַבְרָם** (*avram*), Abram and **הַמְּוֹן** (*hamon*), multitude, by dropping the final letter **ם** of **אַבְרָם**, and adding the first syllable **הַם** of **הַמְּוֹן**, the name would accordingly be a contraction of **אַבְרָם הַמְּוֹן** (*avram hamon*), i. e., *exalted father of multitude*. This etymology of the word seems to be clearly indicated by the context **כִּי אֲבִי הַמְּוֹן נִתְחַדָּךְ** "for a father of a multitude of

pledge that God would fulfill his promise. We have already explained ch. xi. 29, that the name שָׂרַי Sarai, denotes *one struggling or contending*; this name is now changed to שָׂרָה "Sarah," (ver. 15) denoting *a princess, i. e., a princess of many nations.*

10. *This is My covenant which ye shall keep between Me and you and thy seed after thee; circumcise every male child among you.*

Some of my readers are perhaps not aware that circumcision was practiced among other nations than the Hebrews and the descendants of Ishmael, but such is undoubtedly the case. Indeed, many modern critics labour hard to prove that it had its origin in Egypt, and that the Hebrews, as well as some other nations, derived the custom from the Egyptians. Among those who strenuously upheld this theory, is Spencer, who enters fully into the discussion of the subject in his work *De Legibus Hebræorum, Lib. I., cap. IV., sec. 4.* Kalisch also positively asserts that "among the nations which derived the custom of circumcision from the Egyptians, were undoubtedly the Hebrews." (Com. on Genes. p. 388.) Le Clerk, though he does not speak quite so positively, still suggests that the Egyptian practice seems to have given occasion to the Divine command to Abraham. (Com. on ver. 10.) And this view is more or less pertinaciously maintained by all the rationalistic writers. The whole scriptural evidence, however, clearly goes to show, that the sacred narrative here contains the account of the origin of circumcision. Our verse distinctly declares circumcision to be the sign of the covenant concluded between God and Abram and his seeds: "This is my covenant," that is the sign of my covenant as is more fully explained in verse 11. In verse 12, the time is specified when the rite was to be performed, namely, on the eighth day, and also on whom it was obligatory to observe it. The obligation of observing the rite is emphatically repeated in verse 13, and the reason assigned why it was to be observed: "my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." In verse 14 is set forth the fearful punishment for wilfully neglecting the observance of the ordinance: "that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." We may here

nations, I have constituted thee." Many critics explain the form of the name as derived from אב המון (*av hamon*) *father of multitude*, but they do not account for the occurrence of the letter ך. Others, in order to get over this difficulty derive it from אב (*av*) *father*, and רהם (*raham*) *multitude*; but there is no such word as רהם (*raham*) existing in Hebrew, and the cognate Arabic word (*ruham*) *multitude*, occurs very rarely, and it is hardly probable that a foreign word would be employed in forming such a significant name.

observe that commentators are by no means agreed as to the full force of the phrase, "that soul shall be cut off from his people." The same punishment was to be incurred for neglecting the observance of the passover (Exod. xii. 19), which was the symbol of the national covenant between God and Israel. Many writers understand the phrase merely to mean that "the person who wilfully disregards the observance of the rite forfeits thereby his connection with the Hebrew community, and all the benefits and blessings which the covenant confers." The more common explanation however is, that the phrase denotes *punishment by death*, either by direct judgment of God, if the offence was not known, or by the sentence of the properly constituted judges, if the offence was known. Some of the Rabbinical writers even maintain that it signifies something more than mere temporal death. Thus the renowned writer Maimonides remarks: "That soul shall be cut off, which we have heard explained thus, *cut off in this world and cut off in the world to come*." That the phrase implies *punishment by death* seems to be evident from several passages of Scripture. Thus in Lev. xvii. 10, we read: "I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people," that is, by direct judgment of God. A striking proof that death was really the consequence of the omission of circumcision is afforded in the case of Moses neglecting to circumcise his son, as recorded in Exod. iv. 24, 25: "And it came to pass by the way, in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him," &c. Now, as circumcision was instituted by God Himself as a sign of the covenant, surely, it is most unreasonable to suppose that He would adopt a rite as a sign which is practised among heathens. Especially when we take into consideration, that many of the Mosaic laws were directly designed to guard against the adoption of heathen customs and practices, and to isolate the Hebrews as much as possible from their surrounding idolatrous nations. (See more on this subject, vol. i. 269 *et seq.*) We have had already occasion to show upon what flimsy grounds some of the rationalistic theories are founded, and this Egyptian origin theory of circumcision, does certainly not rest upon any more solid basis. It so happens that several of the classical writers, as Herodotus, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus, mention that circumcision was practised among the Egyptians, and immediately our modern critics jump at the conclusion, that the Hebrews derived it from that nation. They apparently never gave it a moment's thought, that the Egyptians might have adopted it from the Hebrews, and which no doubt is the case. It is true, that Herodotus speaks of it as a custom ancient in his time, and as existing among the Egyptians and Ethiopians, but then he lived more

than a thousand years after Moses, and after all he was not sure whether the custom originated with the Egyptians or Ethiopians. (ii. 104.) There is nothing in the writings of these authors, or in the works of any other ancient writer, to show that circumcision was practised before the time of Moses by any other nation than the Hebrews, whilst, on the contrary, the Egyptians and other nations are spoken of as uncircumcised people, even in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, "Behold," says the prophet, "the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all *them* which *are* circumcised with the uncircumcised; Egypt and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that have the corners (or extremities) of *their* hair (or locks) clipped,* that dwell in the wilderness: for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* uncircumcised in heart." (ix. 25, 26.) Here the reader will perceive, "all the nations" are declared to be uncircumcised, whilst "the house of Israel" is said to be "uncircumcised in heart," that is *impure of heart*.

Circumcision was evidently adopted among other nations from the Hebrews, not from religious motives, but from the belief that it was a preventative of some virulent diseases. Hence we find it practised among people who neither observe any religious ceremonies, nor possess any moral feelings, such, for instance, as the Troglodytes or *cave dwellers*. Philo Judæus distinctly declares that it prevents the painful disease of *avθραξ carbuncle*, and obviates some terrible disorders. Travellers testify also to its beneficial effects among Bushmen. Christian missionaries, too, who have exerted themselves to the utmost for its abolition among the Abyssinians, desisted when they perceived the dangerous physical consequences arising from its discontinuance. We find the custom in use, too, among the Kafir nations of South Africa, and according to some travellers it exists in some of the southern islands of the Indian Seas and the Pacific Ocean, and also among some American tribes. Through the Mohammedans, it spread among the Turks, Persians, and Indians. It is estimated that even at the present time, it is held in great veneration by no less than upwards of 150 millions of the earth's population, who regard all uncircumcised persons as unclean, and look upon them with great contempt. Very frequently there may be seen on the cover of the Koran, the phrase: "Let the unclean (uncircumcised) not touch it."

*The phrase *וְעַל כָּל קְצוֹצֵי פֶאֶה* is in the Authorized Version wrongly rendered "and all *that are* in the utmost corners"; it is used here in contempt of the Arabs of the desert, who make it a practice to clip the corners of the hair. Herodotus speaks of those Arabs as wearing their hair cut in this manner. The rendering in the Revised Version is similar to the one which I have given.

The *mode* and *time* of performing it, differs greatly among those nations. Among the Hebrews the rite must be performed on the eighth day, and even should that day fall upon the Sabbath. (Compare John vii. 22, 23.) The reason why the rite was not to be performed before the eighth day, probably was, because all newly born creatures were considered unclean for seven days, (see Lev. xii. 2, 3), and therefore could not be offered to God. Hence no animal could be offered before it was eight days old. (Com. Lev. xxii. 27.) At the time of circumcision the child received its name. On the day when the rite is performed the Hebrews are accustomed to call the child "the bridegroom of circumcision."

17. *And Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born to one that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear?*

The promise in the preceding verse that Sarah should bear a son at her age was of such a stupendous nature that the aged patriarch fell in adoration upon his face, and his heart being filled with joy and astonishment he laughed. The context, however, clearly shows that it was out of wonderment that he laughed, and not out of incredulity, or ridicule as many commentators explain. We know that laughter often springs from very different emotions of the mind. A person, for instance, suddenly surprised by the announcement of some good news is very apt to give vent to his excited feeling by laughter. "And said in his heart," to say in one's heart, is an idiomatic expression, meaning to think or say to oneself. According to some travellers, many of the savages of the Pacific ocean make use of the phrase, "to speak in the belly," for to think.

18. *And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!*

The prayer "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" evidently implies that after the promise of a son by Sarah, some fears regarding the welfare of Ishmael had risen up in the mind of Abraham, and he prays therefore that he may live and enjoy the blessings promised him. We may remark that the verb *חַיָּה* (*chayah*) to live, is sometimes used in the sense to thrive, to prosper, so that the passage may be rendered "O that Ishmael might prosper before thee." God will always graciously receive the sincere and devout prayers of His children, and now replied to Abraham:

19. *And God said, Indeed, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.*

20. *And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold, I have blessed him, and I shall make him fruitful, and shall multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I shall make him a great nation.*

21. *But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.*

"Behold I have blessed him;" *i. e.*, I will bless him. The reader who may not be acquainted with the Hebrew modes of expression, will do well to remember, that the sacred writers very frequently speak of a future event in order to indicate absolute certainty of its fulfilment as if already having taken place. They see, as it were, with the prophetic eye the event already transpiring. Thus in chap. xv. 18, "unto thy seed" נְחִיתִי (*nathatti*) I have given this land," *i. e.*, I will give. Some of the Rabbinical writers very properly remark, "He does not say, 'I will give,' but 'I have given,' and yet Abraham has as yet begotten no children. But because *the word of the holy blessed God is a deed*, therefore He speaketh in this manner." (So also I Kings iii. 13.) "And I have given thee also that which thou hast not asked," *i. e.*, I will give. And so in many other places. "And shall make him fruitful," &c. The blessings bestowed on Ishmael were worldly blessings, he was to grow into a numerous nation, no less than twelve princes should descend from him. We have here the remarkable coincident, that the son of Hagar is constituted the father of twelve princes, just as Jacob the son of Isaac was the father of twelve heads of tribes. In chap. xxv. 13, 14, 15, the names of the twelve princes are given. "But my covenant shall be with Isaac," the covenant of grace which was to last for ever, is established with Isaac, by him should Abraham's seed be called. (Chap. xxi. 12.) Among his descendants the true worship of God was to be preserved. It has been well remarked, that "the basis on which the future salvation of mankind was to be erected, was not the transitory and cold glitter of worldly greatness, but the eternal sunshine of truth."

But although the covenant was established with Isaac and his seed after him, yet from the fact that it was commanded, verse 13, that "every male child among you in your generations; who is born in the house or bought with money of any stranger who *is not of thy soil*" was to be circumcised, it is evident that strangers not lineal descendants of Abraham were received into the fellowship of the covenant. In the time of the Hebrew commonwealth, it was not compulsory on strangers to receive the rite of circumcision as it was in the times of the patriarchs, it was entirely left to their option. "The strangers of the gate," were indeed obliged to observe what the Hebrews termed *the seven laws of Noah*, which we

have already given, and by observing these laws, they secured to themselves certain legal and social advantages; they were, however, barred from enjoying any spiritual privileges, which could only be obtained by entering the covenant through circumcision.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. *And the LORD appeared to him in the oak-grove of Mamre: and he was sitting in the tent-door in the heat of the day.*

A short time—according to Lightfoot, three months—after the events recorded in the preceding chapter, the Almighty manifested Himself again to Abraham. This manifestation is perhaps the most remarkable recorded in the Old Testament, it shows in the most striking manner in what great favour Abraham stood with God, for He not only appeared to him, but partook also of his hospitality—for we will immediately show that one of the “three men” was Jehovah—and afterwards made known to him His intention of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, just in the manner as a person would confide to a friend some important undertaking which he is about to enter upon. The chief purpose of this manifestation was to convey to Sarah also the promise of a son which had been made to Abraham alone. In the Authorized Version, אֱלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא (*elone Mamre*) is again rendered “plains of Mamre,” instead of “oaks” or “oak-grove of Mamre,” in the Revised Version, it is rendered “oaks of Mamre.” When this manifestation took place, the patriarch was sitting “in the tent-door in the heat of the day.” The intense heat during the middle of the day in the eastern climes, compels the laborers and travellers to rest during that time.

2. *And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, three men stood opposite to him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed down to the ground.*

“Three men stood עָלָיו (*alav*) opposite to him”; in the Authorized Version it is rendered “stood by him,” which, it will at once be seen, creates an incongruity, for if the men stood “by” Abraham at the tent door where he had been sitting, how can it be said that “he ran to meet them.” The context requires - עַל (*alav*) to be rendered here by “opposite to him,”

or "over against him," as in the Revised Version, and by most German translators, and which is quite admissible.* This rendering removes the apparent inconsistency. When Abraham saw the three men standing before him at a little distance; and perceiving that they stood still, the aged patriarch with genuine hospitality which is always the characteristic of pure piety, eager to perform an act of kindness, ran to meet the strangers, and begged them not to pass on until they had refreshed themselves. The act of hospitality described in our passage, is quite in accordance with the prevalent practice among Oriental nations, who have ever been distinguished for their strict observance of this virtue. In the Old Testament we find many similar instances recorded, as Genes. xix. 2; Exod. ii. 20; Judg. xix. 16-21. The patriarch Job says:

The stranger did not lodge in the street;
But I opened my doors to the traveller.—(Chap. xxxi. 32.)

In the Mosaic law, hospitality is directly enjoined. (See Lev. xix. 33; Deut. xiv. 29. In the New Testament, its observance is likewise enforced. (See Rom. xii. 13; 1 Tim. v. 10; Heb. xiii. 2, 3; 1 Peter iv. 9-10.) The early Christians were so zealous in the discharge of this sacred duty, that even the heathens admired them for it. In the Rabbinical writings, we find also great stress laid upon the exercise of this virtue. As an example, we may quote a remark of Rabbi Bechai, who says, in his Commentary on the Pentateuch כל המרחיק במצות אכסניא יורש גן עדן *i. e.*, "every one that keeps the laws of hospitality inherits paradise." In the Koran, this great principle is also inculcated. In the fourth chapter there is the following command: "Show kindness unto parents and relations, to orphans and the poor, to your neighbor who is of kin to you, and also your neighbor who is a stranger, to your familiar companions, and to the traveller." To the scrupulous and strict observance of these precepts by the followers of Mohammed the unanimous voice of all Oriental travellers bears ample testimony. An Arab, on arriving at a village, proceeds to the house of some one who is known to him, and says to the master of the house: "I am your guest." The host immediately welcomes the traveller, and sets before him the best that his house affords. Should the traveller not have any acquaintances in the place, he dismounts at any house, fastens his horse, and sits down to smoke his pipe until the master of the house bids him welcome, and offers him his

*When the preposition על (*al*), the primary meaning of which is *above*, is employed to denote a position, it may be rendered by, *at*, *near*, *by*, *over against*, or *opposite to*.

evening meal. In the morning, the stranger proceeds on his journey, and offers no other return for the hospitality he had received than the usual parting salutation: "God be with you."

The traveller Tavernier relates an act of hospitality extended to his party, and which resembles the one of Abraham in our passage. "We were not above a musket shot from Anna" (a town and caravan station of Syria), says Mr. Tavernier, "when we met with a comely old man, who came up to me, and, taking my horse by the bridle, said: 'Friend, come and wash thy feet, and eat bread at my house. Thou art a stranger; and since I have met thee upon the road, never refuse me the favor which I desire of thee.' We could not choose, but go along with him to his house, where he feasted us in the best manner he could, giving us, over and above, barley for the horses, and for us he killed a lamb, and some hens."—*Tavernier's Travels*.

Mr. Robinson, in his "Biblical Researches," likewise speaks of acts of hospitality extended to his party. He says: "Being now off the track of all former travellers, we came in contact here with Oriental hospitality in its primitive and genuine form. The villagers supplied us with every thing we desired; regarding it as an honor, and without expecting a recompense. Such is the custom in all these mountains." Among the Hindoos, hospitality is also practised in a liberal manner. They not only extend it to their friends and to the stranger, but not unfrequently even to their enemies, saying, "the tree does not withdraw its shade even from the wood-cutter."

3. *And he said, Lord, if now I have found favour in Thine eyes, pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy servant.*

"And he said, Lord." It is evident that Abraham must have perceived that one of the "three men" was the Lord, for he addresses Him by the title אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*) Lord, and is, no doubt, the same who, in verse 10, makes the promise, and is in verses 13, 14, called יְהוָה (*Jehovah*), Authorized Version, LORD.

4. *Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and recline under the tree.*

"And wash your feet," that is, have them washed: for this office was commonly performed by servants and slaves, and not by the guests themselves. When David sent servants to Abigail to bring her that he might take her to wife, she humbly answered, "Behold let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." (1 Sam. xxv. 40-41.) The washing of the feet of guests forms the most grateful part of hospitality among the Orientals, as the sandals worn by them only protect the soles, the feet soon become scorched and

covered with dust. Indeed, no covering can effectually protect the feet from the fine dust of the desert, which, with the perspiration produces a most annoying irritation upon the skin, from which, next to the allaying of the thirst, travellers are desirous to relieve themselves.

5. *And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts ; after that ye may pass on, since ye have come over to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.*

"A morsel of bread," that is, a morsel of food. The Hebrews employed לֶחֶם (*lechem*), *bread*, to express any kind of food. It is even several times employed in the Old Testament to express food for animals. Thus Job xxiv. 5: "The wilderness *yieldeth* them לֶחֶם (*lechem*), food for *their* young ones." It is for the young of the wild ass. (See also Is. lxxv. 25.) The patriarch endeavours to make his hospitality appear as unostentatious as possible, and says, "a little water," "a morsel of bread," he does not wish them to think that he is going to any trouble on their account. "And comfort ye your hearts," more literally "sustain," or "strengthen your hearts. "Since ye have come over to your servant"; in this passage the phraseology of the words פִּי עַל כֶּן is not very clear, but the meaning of the passage obviously is, since your journey has led you to pass this way. The rendering given in the Authorized Version, "for therefore are ye come to your servant," and which has also been adopted by many Commentators, leads to the supposition that they had come for the purpose to be entertained, which is altogether against the context. It would hardly have been polite, not to say unbecoming, on the part of Abraham, to press the strangers to partake of his hospitality, and immediately afterwards telling them, that they had come for the purpose of being entertained. In cases where the phraseology is doubtful, we must be altogether guided by the context.

6. *And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three seahs of fine flour, knead it, and make cakes.*

We have in this verse, and the two following verses, a beautiful and faithful Oriental picture, it has been verified by all Eastern travellers as being exact in every particular. Abraham asked Sarah, his wife, and not one of the many maid servants of his household, to make cakes. Now the baking of bread or cakes is one of the first accomplishments of Eastern females of the higher as well as the lower classes, and they especially pride themselves in their expertness in making pastry. The wife of the mightiest and proudest sheikh does not consider it beneath her dignity to knead and bake bread with her own

hands, especially when the same is wanted for guests. According to 2 Sam. xiii. 6-10, the princess Tamar seems to have been expert in baking cakes, and readily consented to perform this menial service, when requested to do so. "Three seahs," a seah contains about two gallons and a half of liquid measure, or a peck, dry measure. Some critics have deemed the quantity of flour here ordered to be used as too excessive. "Three pecks of flour," they say, "to be used for three persons, is altogether unreasonable." But here again those critics have evidently not troubled themselves to inquire what may have been the custom of the country, and of those times. Now the fact is, it appears to have been the custom for hosts, if they wished to show special honor to guests, to set before them portions far beyond what they were able to consume. We have a striking example of this in the portion which Joseph sent to Benjamin, which was "five times as much as any of the portions of all the rest." (Ch. xliii. 34.) The large portions were also a sign to the guests that they were cheerfully and not grudgingly entertained. Some writers have supposed, too, that "a part of the cakes may have been intended to be taken as provision on their journey."

7. *And Abraham ran to the herd, and fetched a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man; and he hastened to dress it.*

The patriarch was determined to entertain his guests with the choicest things that his household afforded. He therefore himself selected the best and most tender calf of his flocks, and having done this, he gave it to a servant to make it ready for the table. In choosing a calf Abraham displayed a liberality which is now seldom practised among the Arabs and Turks, who generally kill either a lamb or kid, considering a calf as altogether too extravagant. The animal killed at such unexpected visits is, whilst it is yet warm, at once roasted before the fire; and the Orientals consider the meat thus immediately cooked after the killing, much more tender and better tasting than if it were kept for some time.

8. *And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree; and they did eat.*

We have here a faithful picture of a Bedouin repast, such as would be furnished at this day by an Arabian chief in entertaining guests. Both butter and milk are freely used by the Arabians. The Bedouins are very fond of putting a lump of butter on the meat, and allowing it to melt. Travellers speak of the Arabs being highly amused in seeing Europeans spreading

the butter on the bread, and in order to show the proper way of using it, would break off a small bit of bread, and heap upon it as large a lump of butter as it would hold, and eat it with the greatest relish. Milk is abundantly used among all nomadic tribes, both in cooking and drinking. It is proper to state here, that the Hebrew word, חֶמְאָה (*chemah*) which I have rendered "butter," primarily denotes *thick or curdled milk*, hence it is used in Scripture to denote *sour milk, cream, butter, or cheese*, and it is only by the context that we can distinguish which of these meanings it has in any given passage. "Butter" is, no doubt, the proper rendering in our verse, though Kalisch and some others, have rendered it "sour milk." "And he stood by them," that is, he served them. So the sheiks, at the present day, stand when they entertain distinguished guests, and attend to them.

9. *And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.*

10. *And He said, I shall surely return unto thee, at *the returning season; and, behold, Sarah thy wife will have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, and it was behind Him.*

This visit of the three heavenly beings, as we have already stated, was intended for Sarah, rather than for Abraham, in order to convey to her also the promise of a son, which had previously been made to Abraham alone; and hence the first inquiry of the guests is: "Where is Sarah thy wife"? Being told that she was in the tent, which was so near to the tree that she could easily hear what was said, the one whom Abraham had addressed as אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*) Lord, renews the promise that Sarah should have a son "at the returning season." "And it," i. e., the door, was behind him who spoke.

12. *And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure? and my lord being old also.*

"And Sarah laughed." Abraham when the promise was made to him, laughed for joy, but Sarah's laughter arose from

"The phrase כָּעֵת חַיָּה (*caeth chaiyah*) which I have rendered "at the returning season," is peculiar, and has therefore given rise to different renderings. In the Authorized Version, it is rendered, "according to the time of life," but this rendering is not admissible as חַיָּה (*chaiyah*) is the feminine adjective of חַי (*chai*) living or reviving. The meaning obviously is, *when the time or season is reviving again, i. e., returning again*. This is placed beyond a doubt by comparing verse 14, where the phrase occurs again, but where the explanatory word לְמוֹעֵד (*lammoed*), "at the appointed time" is added. Now which was "the appointed time"? The answer is found in ch. xvii. 24, where we have it more fully and more explicitly expressed, "at this set time in the year." The conclusion of the covenant with Abraham, and the promise made to Sarah were nearly contemporary.

incredulity, she regarded the accomplishment of such a promise under the circumstances as an impossibility. "My lord being old *also*." Sarah calling her husband "my lord," does not imply a slavish dependency such as Eastern ladies are now subjected to by their husbands, which never prevailed among the ancient Hebrews, but respect and high regard; and the apostle Peter records it to her honor, and as an example to all married women. (1 Peter iii. 6.) The Hebrews, seem to have used אֲדֹנָי (*adoni*) *my lord*, as an honorary address to any one to whom reverence and honor are due. As for instance, a child addressing a father (see ch. xxxi. 35); or addressing a brother (see Lev. xii. 11).

13. *And the LORD said to Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child, since I am old?*

The reader will perceive from "LORD" being printed in capitals, that in the original יהוה Jehovah is employed, which at once places it beyond a doubt, that one of the guests was Jehovah, and which is further attested in the sequel of the chapter. It was probably not customary for ladies to be present when strangers were entertained, and this would account for the question being put to Abraham, Sarah having not yet come in the presence of the guests.

14. *Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I shall return again to thee, at the returning of the season, and Sarah shall have a son.*

Here again we have a display of God's merciful dealing with his erring children. Sarah's unbelief demanded a reproof in order that it might be dispelled. But the reproof was of the mildest nature possible, simply reminding her that there is nothing too difficult, or according to the more literal rendering *too wonderful* or *extraordinary* for the Almighty to perform. It would be well, that our modern disbelievers in the miracles of Scripture, would ponder well over the question here put to Abraham, "Is there any thing too wonderful for the Lord?" It declares, in unmistakable language, that the Author of the laws of nature is able to suspend those laws if He will, and that *the teaching of science* in the cases of miracles, must give way to *the teaching of Scripture*.

15. *Then Sarah denied, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, Nay; thou didst laugh.*

From the language in verse 13, Sarah must have perceived that He who uttered it was a discernor of the secrets of the

heart, and that nothing is hidden from Him, and yet, instead of humbly confessing her guilt, or even attempting to extenuate her conduct, out of fear of punishment, she positively denied that she had laughed. And so it has indeed ever been. How rarely do we find any one having done wrong ready to acknowledge it, but rather seeking to escape the consequences by strenuously denying it, or if that is not possible, endeavouring to justify the act. Thus one sin seldom comes alone. Although Sarah had aggravated her offence by adding to her incredulity a direct falsehood, yet God is ever "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness," and merely corrected her, "Nay; thou didst laugh." After this reproof we hear nothing more of Sarah's unbelief, but on the contrary, St. Paul includes her among those who were distinguished for their faith. (Heb. xi. 11.)

After the repast was finished the heavenly guests rose up and proceeded on their journey towards Sodom, and Abraham, as it was customary, accompanied his guests some distance on their way. It seems to have formed a part of Oriental hospitality to accompany guests a short distance on leaving. It indicated not only that they had been welcome, but also that their company afforded pleasure. In the New Testament it is in several places enjoined as a duty. (See Rom. xv. 24; 3 John 6; Acts xx. 38.)

17. *And the LORD (Jehovah) said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do;*

Here it will be seen that one of the heavenly beings is again spoken of as "Jehovah," and it is He who discloses to Abraham what He purposes to do. If we turn to verse 22, we find that the two angels went on their way to Sodom, whilst Abraham remained standing before Jehovah to intercede for the inhabitants of Sodom, and, according to ch. xix. 1, only two angels came to Sodom in the evening. "Shall I hide from Abraham?" that is, I will surely not hide. According to the Hebrew idiom, when in the speaker's opinion the answer to a question should be in the negative, the interrogation has then the force of a *positive negation*. Thus ch. iv. 9, "*Am I my brother's keeper?*" meaning, I am surely not. Also Job iv. 17, "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" meaning, surely, mortal man is not more just than God. And so in very many other places; the reader would, therefore, do well to bear this idiom in mind. "And the LORD said," not to Abraham, but to Himself, similar to ch. viii. 21. This verse and the two ensuing verses may, therefore, be regarded as forming a Divine soliloquy.

18. *Seeing that Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him!*

What unspeakable condescension we have here on the part of Jehovah, the Creator of the universe in disclosing to Abraham what he was about to do. But God had just concluded a covenant with him, by which he was constituted the hereditary possessor of the land, and a blessing to all the nations of the earth, he was consequently deeply interested in the impending fate of the doomed cities and its numerous inhabitants. God, therefore, being mindful of His covenant, afforded Abraham an opportunity to plead for these wicked cities, that he might become convinced that the awful punishment was founded on the strictest justice.

19. *For I have chosen him, that he might command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD might bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him.*

This verse is closely connected with the preceding, and assigns the reason why Abraham will become a mighty nation and a source of blessing to all the world, for as our verse tells us, the LORD had chosen him to be the spiritual father of all nations of the earth, that he might instruct his descendants to keep the ways of the Lord and walk in the paths of righteousness.

"For I have chosen him," in the Authorized Version it is rendered, "For I know him," which is certainly according to the primary meaning of the verb יָדַע (*yada*) to know. But this verb, like most Hebrew verbs, has various shades of meanings, and most modern commentators have taken the verb here in the sense to choose or elect, which certainly is more suitable to the context. It is so used again, for instance, in Amos iii. 2: "You only יָדַעְתִּי (*yadati*) I have chosen of all the families of the earth." The rendering in the Revised Version is rather ambiguous. "For I have known him, to the end that he may command."

20. *And the LORD said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah *indeed is great, and their sin indeed is very grievous.*

"The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah," does not, as some commentators explain merely mean, the report of the wickedness

*The particle כִּי is frequently used to introduce a statement with special emphasis, and then takes the signification of indeed, truly, or verily. As, for example, Isa. vii. 9, "if ye will not believe, כִּי truly, ye shall not be established."

of those cities, but rather, the cry for vengeance. So chap. iv. 10, the blood of Abel is crying from the ground for vengeance. The expression means, a moral demand for punishment. Although only Sodom and Gomorrah are mentioned, yet it is evident, from Deut. xxix. 23, that the two other neighbouring cities were also destroyed. Perhaps these two cities exceeded the others in wickedness, and are, therefore, particularly mentioned.

21. *I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is came unto me ; *and if not, I will know.*

As God is omnipresent and omniscient ; the language in our verse must not be taken in a literal sense, but is merely employed to teach in the most lucid and impressive manner, that God's judgments are based upon the strictest justice. He is, therefore, represented as coming down to make Himself strict inquiries whether the wickedness of those cities is really as great as the cry for vengeance indicates. It brings before us, also, in a most vivid manner, our absolute duty to make the most careful and searching inquiries before we condemn any one. In our days, we are unfortunately inclined to give too readily credence to mere report.

23. *And Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked ?*

24. *Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city : wilt Thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty that are therein.*

After the two angels had proceeded on their way towards Sodom, Abraham, not unmindful that he was but "dust and ashes," meekly drew near to the Judge of the whole earth to intercede for those wicked cities. And it has been well observed that "here commences the most remarkable instance of human intercession to be met within the revealed word of God, in which the faithfulness of Abraham and his near access to the throne of grace, the astonishing love of kindness and forbearance of the great Jehovah, are painted in colours which the pencil of uninspired mortality dare not imitate." Abraham, it will be seen, was not influenced in his intercession by any

*The phrase **וְאִם לֹא אֶדְעָה** (*weim lo edeah*), may be rendered, "and if not I will take cognizance of it." The verb **יָדָע** (*yada*), to know, is sometimes employed with the accessory signification, to take cognizance. Thus, for instance, Pa. i. 6 : "For **יָדָע יְהוָה** (*yodeah Jehovah*), the LORD knoweth," that is, takes cognizance "of the way of the righteous," in order to reward it. "but the way of the wicked shall perish." In our verse it means, "I will take cognizance," and act accordingly.

selfish motives. He knew that his kinsman Lot was living in Sodom, yet he does not even mention his name. He was actuated in his intercession solely by what he regarded to be an act of justice, that the righteous might not indiscriminately suffer with the wicked. He does, therefore, not appeal so much to God's mercy as to His attribute of Divine justice. There is no plea made that the evil deeds of the inhabitants might go unpunished, for the pious patriarch knew well, that God is a "God of vengeance," and "a jealous God," and who will "by no means spare the guilty," but merely that the cities might be spared for the sake of the few who may be found in them who had not forsaken the paths of righteousness. From the communication which God made to Abraham, in verse 20, he no doubt become fully impressed with the fearful state of depravity that must exist in those cities. Yet he charitably hoped that in such a populous city as Sodom there might at least be found fifty righteous persons; and, therefore, began his plea based upon that number. And here we must observe, that the other cities were not excluded from the intercession, but their fate was made dependent on the number of righteous persons found in Sodom as being the leading city, and hence that city is only mentioned. The ardent sympathy which had sprung up in the heart of the good patriarch, aroused in him a fear that after all there might not be found in Sodom even fifty righteous persons, and encouraged by the readiness with which God yielded to his petition, he ventured to reduce the number to forty-five. His great anxiety for the righteous, and seeing also that the LORD readily granted his last request, emboldened him to reduce the number still more, and now prayed that the city might be spared if only forty righteous be found in it, and this request being also graciously granted, he continued his intercession until the number was reduced to ten. When this insignificant number was reached, Abraham ceased his intercession; so that it has been truly said, that "Abraham was tired asking before God was tired granting." The destruction of the wicked cities which immediately followed, proves that not even ten righteous persons could be found in Sodom.

The narrative of Abraham's intercession teaches some very important lessons. In the first place we learn from it, how highly the righteous are esteemed in the sight of God, and what blessings they may be to the country or the place where they live. Had only ten righteous persons been found in Sodom, God would, for their sake, have spared it and the other cities which shared in its fate. In the second place it teaches in the clearest manner *the efficacy of intercessory prayer*, if humbly and devoutly offered up. As deeply steeped in sin as

Sodom was, yet Abraham had all his prayers granted; "I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten," was God's gracious answer to the last of the six intercessory prayers. And thirdly, it brings before us in a marked manner *the duty of intercessory prayer*. If Abraham, as a perfect stranger, fervently interceded in behalf of a guilty city, whose destruction could by no possibility have injured him, does it not become our duty to intercede for our country, city, relatives, and friends. The neglect of praying for others is spoken of (1 Sam. xii. 23), as sinning against God; "God forbid," says Samuel, "that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you." (See also Luke xi. 8-13.)

33. *And the LORD departed when He had finished to speak with Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place.*

"And the Lord departed," not to go to Sodom, but disappeared, rendered in the Chaldee Version: "The glory of the LORD was lifted up."

CHAPTER XIX.

1. *And the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom: and when Lot saw them, he rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face to the ground.*

"And Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom," We have already stated that in ancient times the gates of a city were used as places of public resort. There the citizens assembled for conversation and social intercourse. There also justice was administered. Hence the expression *in the gate* often means *in court or before the tribunal*. (See Deut. xxv. 7; Prov. xxii. 22.) "Gate" is sometimes used for *assembly or concourse* itself; thus Ruth iii. 11, "all the gate of my people," *i. e.*, all the concourse of my people "doth know that thou art a virtuous woman." The gates were also used as market places. The gates being used as places of public assembly, will account for the Mosaic ordinance, that parts of the law should be written on the gate. (Deut. vi. 9; xi. 20.) This was intended to remind those who assembled there of their religious duties, and probably also to indicate to strangers that may enter that the city belonged to God. As the gates would not hold many people, spacious open places near them were reserved, furnished with seats for the use of the public.

Lot did not wait until the strangers had come up to the gate to offer his hospitality, but like Abraham, he went to meet them, and respectfully saluted them. Modern travellers mention that the Arabs regard it as an honour to entertain strangers, and they very often contend with one another for the honor. (See Burckhardt's *Bed.* p. 280; Tavernier's *Travels*, B. i. 125.) The angels at first refused to accept Lot's hospitality, "Nay, but we will abide in the street over night," they said, this was evidently to prove his character, to see whether his proffered hospitality was really sincere, and what anxiety he would evince for their safety. They did not refuse, as some writers have explained, in order that they might more readily observe the conduct of the inhabitants; for in that case, they would not have yielded to Lot's entreaty. Besides, as God's messengers, they already possessed all the information regarding the fearful depraved state of the Sodomites. Lot showed his great anxiety for the safety of the strangers, should they persist in their determination to remain in the street all night, by the urgent manner he repeated his invitation: "He pressed upon them greatly." His conduct showed him worthy of the honor to be the host of God's messengers, and the angels yielded to his earnest solicitations, "and entered into his house." "And he made them a feast." Lot's entertainment apparently differed from Abraham's, which was a genuine Bedouin entertainment, whilst Lot's seems to have been more of a regular feast. The term *מִשְׁתֶּה* (*mishteh*) employed in the original is derived from *שָׁתָה* (*shathah*), to drink; hence its primary meaning is *a drinking*. (Comp. Est. v. 6; vii. 7.) But frequently also used in the sense of *a feast* or *banquet*. Thus Abram when Isaac was weaned, made "*מִשְׁתֶּה גָדוֹל*" (*mishteh gadol*), "a great feast." (Ch. xxi. 8.) So Isaac made *מִשְׁתֶּה* (*mishteh*) "a feast" to Abimelech and his officers, "and they ate and drank." (Ch. xxvi. 26, 30. See also ch. xxix. 32. Judges xiv. 12; Est. i. 3, ch. v. 4.)

The sacred narrative next proceeds to recount an occurrence which at once shows the awful depravity of the Sodomites. Before the strangers had laid down, the inhabitants of the city, not the young and thoughtless only, but the old as well, from every quarter of the city, came and surrounded Lot's dwelling, clamouring that the strangers should be surrendered to them, so that they might deal with them as they pleased. The shamelessness with which they openly declared their iniquitous design, clearly establishes the fact that the inhabitants were habitually addicted to the commission of the most abominable and revolting crimes—crimes such as ought never to have entered the mind of any human being. And yet they were so commonly indulged in by the idolatrous people at that time,

that it become even necessary to mention them among the Mosaic prohibitory laws. (See Lev. xviii.) Let those writers and lecturers who merely look at the punishment without also inquiring whether it was not well merited, calmly and impartially consider the conduct of the Sodomites as recorded in the sacred narrative, and we feel assured, unless prejudice controls their judgment, they will heartily acquiesce in the sentiment contained in the following lines:

"For who that remembers the tale of transgression,
Or thinks upon Sodom, would mourn for her dead?
No; heaven too long slighted, compels the confession,
That just was her judgment, though awful and dread."

The prophet Isaiah, in speaking of the godless men among the Israelites, says:

* "The show of their countenance doth witness against them;
And they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not.—(Is. iii. 9.)

6. *And Lot went out to them before the door, and shut the door after himself.*

7. *And said, I pray you, brethren, do not act wickedly.*

8. *Behold, I pray you, I have two daughters who have not known a man; I will, I pray you, bring them out to you, and you may do to them as is good in your eyes: only to these men do nothing; for therefore they came under the shadow of my roof.*

Lot's conduct in fearlessly going out to the turbulent Sodomites at whose hands he had little mercy to expect, and by kind words endeavouring to dissuade them from their wicked purpose, is highly praiseworthy, but when he resorts to the expedient by offering to surrender his two daughters as a substitute for his guests to the wilful pleasure of the abandoned Sodomites, his action admits of no justification, and can only be spoken of in terms of the strongest reprobation. It was indeed his duty to do all in his power to protect the strangers to whom he had extended his hospitality, but whilst it was proper for him to have due regard for the sacredness of the rites of hospitality, he had no right to forget the sacred duties of a father towards his daughters. He had no right to resort to an evil in order to avert another evil. After all justifiable means had proved unsuccessful, he should have left the issue to God, trusting in His protection. Whilst we, however, are ready to condemn in severest terms Lot's abominable offer, it is at the same time but just that we should not overlook the

* This does not mean, that their looks betray them, but that they make no effort to conceal their evil deeds.

exceedingly trying position he was placed in. Having pressed the strangers to accept his hospitality, he was in duty, as well as according to custom, bound to protect them from harm, and fearing lest they might suspect him of treachery, he may, in order to assure them of his sincerity, have made the outrageous proposition. To this we may add that he was probably at the time labouring under great excitement, and was hardly conscious of what he was saying: the vindication of his honour, and the safety of his guests engrossing all his thoughts. We all know, that in an excited state of mind, we are apt to say things which we are afterwards heartily sorry to have uttered. Scripture furnishes several examples of extravagant utterances made under excited feelings. Thus Reuben, in order to obtain his father's consent to let his favourite son Benjamin accompany his brethren into Egypt, says: "Thou mayest kill my two sons, if I do not bring him to thee." (Chap. xlii. 37.) Another instance we have in Jephthah's extraordinary vow. (Judg. xi. 30, 31.) Lot, in entreating the Sodomites to desist from their wicked design, appeals to the sacred laws of hospitality, "for therefore they came under the shadow of my roof"; that is, they accepted my hospitality, on the understood condition, that their safety would be guaranteed by doing so. But the lawless Sodomites had no respect even for the generally prevailing laws of hospitality, but became only more turbulent and determined.

9. *And they said, stand back. And they said, This one came to sojourn among us, and he continually acteth as a judge: now we shall deal worse with thee than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, upon Lot, and came near to break the door.*

The phrase *וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שָׁפֹט* (*waiyishpot shaphot*) may either be rendered, "he continually judges," or "acts as a judge," or "he indeed acts as a judge," in either case the words imply that Lot had made it a practice to remonstrate with them about their wicked doings, but as the result shows all his moral remonstrances were of no avail, but on the contrary, according to our verse, it made them only more determined. It is impossible to say what would have been Lot's fate in the hands of those enraged and abandoned Sodomites had not the angels by a miracle saved him. "They smote the men who were at the door with blindness," so that they were unable to find the door. The Hebrew word *סְנוּרִים* (*sanwerim*) *blindness*, here

סְנוּרִים (*sanwerim*) probably denotes *blindness* produced by supernatural agency, whilst *עִוְרוֹן* (*iwaron*), Deut. xxiii. 28, denotes *blindness*, arising from natural causes. This supposition is favoured by the former word being in both cases where it occurs, used in reference to *blindness* produced supernaturally.

employed, occurs only once more, namely, in 2 Kings vi. 18, where in answer to the prayer of Elisha, the Syrian army was smitten with blindness.

The word in our verse is evidently not used in the sense of *actual blindness*, but rather in the sense of a *confused vision*, such as objects swimming before their eyes, which they in vain would strive to seize. This supposition is favored by the word having the *plural form*, and also by its being said, "and they wearied themselves to find the door." Had they been smitten with total blindness, they would at once have desisted to attempt to break the door, but our verse says, that they continued eagerly to look for the door until they had exhausted their strength and patience.

12. *And the men said to Lot, Hast thou here any one besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:*

From the supernatural power manifested by the strangers, Lot must have already perceived that they were no ordinary human beings. But his guests themselves now informed him that they were messengers sent from God to destroy the city on account of its wickedness, and directed him to remove any one belonging to him out of the doomed place. There is nowhere any mention made of Lot having sons. If he had, they must have perished among the inhabitants of the city, for certainly none went out with their father. Although the sons-in-law, as the sequel proved, were no better than the other Sodomites, yet, for Lot's sake, deliverance was offered to them.

14. *And Lot went out, and spoke to his sons-in-law who had taken his daughters, and said, Arise, go out of this place; for the LORD will destroy the city. But he appeared in the eyes of his sons-in-law as one that mocked.*

"And Lot went out," it must have been in the night that Lot went to the houses of his sons-in-law to inform them of the impending catastrophe, and to entreat them to save themselves by leaving the doomed city. We may reasonably suppose that he related to them all that had transpired at his house, and how he had obtained the information, and his coming at such an unwonted time, would at once indicate the urgency of the case. But his godless sons-in-law would not listen to the voice of warning, or be moved by his earnest solicitation, though coming from one who was deeply interested in their welfare. They, on the contrary, looked upon him as if he were merely jesting; they had become so hardened and blinded in their iniquitous practices, that they did not believe

in any judgment of God. "It is all very well," they probably said to themselves, "for an old man to believe such foolish tales from travelling strangers, but they will not do for us. What, destroy this city and busy inhabitants by a fire from heaven? Impossible! Mere childish bugbear! We have been eating and drinking, buying and selling, and we shall no doubt continue to do so." "Who had taken his daughters;" in the original it is *לקחי בנותיו* (*lokeche benothav*) *takers of his daughters*; and may therefore mean, those "who had taken his daughters," or "who were about to take his daughters;" the latter rendering is adopted by Josephus, in the Vulgate, Luther's German Version, and by very many modern commentators; whilst the former rendering is given in the Septuagint, the Targums, and also by a great many modern interpreters. Similarly also, in the Authorized Version, "which had married his daughters." From what is said in verse 15, "and the two daughters *הנמצאות* (*hannimzaoth*) lit. that are found," i. e., who are here, it would appear that there were other daughters who were not present, who had allowed themselves to be influenced by their husbands, to pay no attention to their father's entreaties.

15. *And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, who are here; lest thou be destroyed in the iniquity of the city.*

God in his infinite mercy had long suffered the godless people of Sodom and of the three neighbouring cities to indulge in their abominations, and thus afforded them an opportunity to turn from their evil ways, but they became only more and more hardened in sin, and their wickedness had now reached such a point as to call for immediate punishment. The appointed hour of visitation had now arrived, and when the dawn (not the sun) arose upon the doomed cities, the angels urged Lot on to leave the place lest he be "destroyed in the iniquity of the city," that is, in the punishment of the city. "Iniquity" is in Scripture sometimes used for the punishment of the iniquity. Thus, ch. iv. 13, "My punishment (Heb. *עונתי* *awoni*, my iniquity,) is greater than I can bear."

16. *But he lingered: and the men seized his hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hand of his two daughters, the mercy of the LORD being upon him: and they brought him out, and set him without the city.*

Most commentators ascribe Lot's lingering to his being reluctant to leave his home and earthly goods; thus, for example, Keil and Delitzsch, "he, still delayed, his heart evidently clinging to the earthly home and possessions which he

was obliged to leave." We think, however, it would be just as reasonable, and certainly more charitable, to suppose, that Lot delayed in the hope of his sons-in-law having, during the night, taken a more serious view of the information he gave them, and had resolved to leave the city with him.

17. *And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth without the city, that He said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee; nor stay in all the district; escape to the mountain, lest thou be destroyed.*

The reader will here perceive the sudden change from the plural to the singular, "when they had brought them forth, He said." It would appear from this and from the context, that God is speaking, who had again joined the angels, and hence we find Lot addressing Him, v. 18, אֲדֹנָי (*Adonai*) "Lord, and according to v. 24, it is יְהוָה (*Jehovah*) Himself who destroyed the cities, and not the angels. Lot was also commanded not to look behind, nor stay in any part of the plain. He was not to gratify his curiosity by looking upon the burning cities, or cast a sorrowful look upon the place where he had to leave all his accumulated property and relatives. The command is only given to Lot as the head of the family, but its observance was obligatory to his whole household. This is evident from the punishment of Lot's wife for having disobeyed the command. They were to escape into the mountainous region of Moab, distant several miles to the east of Sodom, for there was no safety for them in the plain. And here we may profitably cast a glance upon Lot's present condition to what it was when he entered Sodom. Then he was a man of great possessions, now he leaves it flying for his life. What a lesson it teaches to young and old to shun bad society, as they would shun poisonous serpents!

18. *And Lot said to them, Oh, not so, Lord:*

19. *Behold, I pray Thee, Thy servant hath found grace in Thy sight, and Thou hast magnified Thy mercy, which Thou hast showed unto me, in saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountain, lest the evil overtake me, and I die.*

20. *Behold, I pray Thee, this city is near to flee thither, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, I pray Thee,—is it not a little one?—and my soul shall live.*

Lot expresses a fear that the mountain which God had commanded him to escape to was too distant, that, before he could arrive there, הָרָע (*hara*) "the evil," i.e., the threatened catastrophe would overtake him, and share the same fate as the doomed cities.

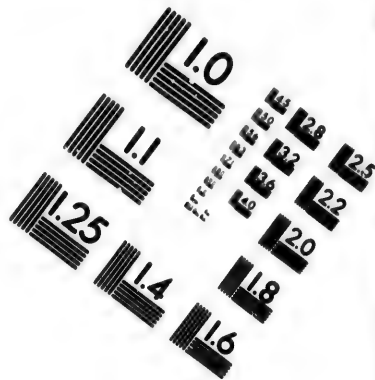
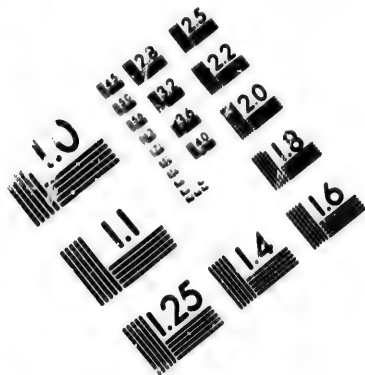
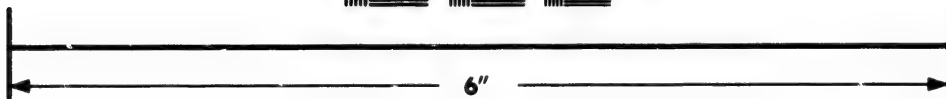
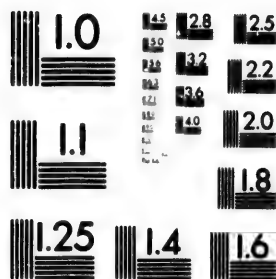


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He therefore anxiously pleads that he may flee into a little town which was near by. This little town was formerly called Bela (ch. xiv. 2.), but from the circumstance of Lot having spoken of it as a *מִצְעָר* (*Mitsar*) "little one," it received the name *צֹרַר* (*Zoar*), i. e. *the little one*. But what shall we say of Lot in making this request? Surely we can ascribe it to nothing else than a want of faith. His duty was to have put his trust in God, and that having commanded him to escape to the mountain He would also protect him from any harm happening to him. Lot pleads as a reason why he should be permitted to take refuge in Zoar, it being only a small place, "is it not a little one?" No doubt wishing thereby to indicate since it contained but few inhabitants, its wickedness was comparatively small also, and might on that account be spared. The Jerusalem Targum has the remark, "it is little, and its sins are little."

21. *And He said to him, Behold, I have accepted thee in this thing also, not to overthrow the city of which thou hast spoken.*

Here again we have a remarkable instance of God's merciful dealing with erring man. The request was of such a nature as was likely to call forth a severe rebuke; but not so, although Zoar was situated in the district which was to be destroyed, yet for Lot's sake it was spared. There exist considerable ruins on the eastern side of the Dead Sea in the Wady Kerek, which are now on the best authority supposed to be those of the little town Zoar. "I have accepted thee," in the original we have the idiomatic expression *נִשְׂאתִי פָנֶיךָ* (*nasathi phanecha*) "I have lifted up thy face," i. e., I have granted thy request. The idiom seems to have originated, from supplicants in the East standing with the head bowed low—expressive of great sorrow or affliction—when asking a favour of a high dignitary, or presenting a petition on some weighty matter, but when the request is granted, the head is lifted up for joy.

23. *The sun rose upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.*

24. *And the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;*

It is evident that the sacred writer in mentioning, "The sun rose upon the earth," wishes thereby to indicate that this visitation of God's wrath was wholly supernatural, there were no black and heavy thunderclouds, the sun rose upon the doomed cities as usual, there was not the slightest indication of a fearful judgment being so near at hand. And, no doubt, when Lot's sons-in-law saw the city bathed in the cheerful and soft light of the rising sun, and every thing appearing serene around

them, they heartily laughed at their father-in-law's credulity in believing the strangers, and his sudden departure from the city. Yet no sooner had Lot entered the small town, which God had preserved for him, than the Almighty rained brimstone and fire from heaven, that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, *ignited brimstone*. The reader not acquainted with Hebrew idiomatic expressions, will, no doubt, have found the phraseology: "The LORD rained—from the LORD out of heaven," somewhat remarkable, but "from the LORD," according to the Hebrew idiom is equivalent to *himself*, the Hebrews employed the noun where we would use the pronoun; so that it would read, "the LORD rained from Himself out of heaven." Similar modes of expression are not uncommon in the Hebrew Scripture. Thus, for example, 1 Kings, viii. 1: "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon," i. e., *unto himself*. So Exod. xxiv. 1. "And He (the LORD) said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD," i. e., *come up unto Me*. A similar mode of expression is found in the New Testament, as Matt. xii. 26, "if Satan cast out Satan," i. e., *cast out himself*, *he is divided against himself*. Although only Sodom and Gomorrah are mentioned in our verse, yet it is evident from Deut. xix. 23, Hos. xi. 8, that the cities Admah and Zeboim were also destroyed.

25. *And He overthrew those cities, and all the district, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the growth of the ground.*

Never before or since has such a catastrophe occurred as that by which the fertile valley of Siddim was totally destroyed. God rained down upon it burning brimstone by which not only its cities and inhabitants were consumed, but the very soil which abounded in asphalt was burned up, and its place occupied by the Dead Sea. And here, it may not be out of place to offer a few remarks on this extraordinary and mysterious lake, which has hitherto baffled the most zealous researches of scientists in their endeavour to account for its origin. The Dead Sea is in the Old Testament spoken of under different names, as *יַם הַמֶּלַח* (*Yam Hammelach*) the Salt Sea, (ch. xiv. 3); *יַם הַקָּדְמוֹנִי* (*Yam Hakkadmoni*), the Eastern Sea (Joel xi. 20); so called in opposition to *יַם הָאֲחֵרֹן* (*Yam Haacharon*) the Western Sea or Mediterranean *יַם הָעֲרָבָה* (*Yam Haaravah*) the Sea of the Arabah or desert plain (Deut. iv. 49.) The Arabs, call it *Baar Loot*, Sea of Lot. Josephus and other Greek writers call it *Lake Asphaltites*, from the great quantity of asphalt found in it, and in its neighbourhood. Among Europeans it is commonly called the Dead Sea, on account of the

dead-like stillness which prevails, and the absence of vegetable and animal life. It is about forty miles long, with an average breadth of nine miles. The shape is that of an elongated oval. A very curious circumstance connected with this Sea is, its having two very dissimilar parts, the northern part having a depth of about 1,200 feet, whilst the southern part does not exceed eighteen feet. From this it appears that the bottom of the Dead Sea consists of two distinct plains a depressed and a more elevated one. The two plains are separated by a very narrow and shallow peninsula, which stretches to a very great distance into the sea from the eastern shore. It is now a very prevalent opinion among travellers who made a careful exploration of the lake, that the shallow part of the lake occupies the former valley of Siddim, and the depression was caused by volcanic action which accompanied the rain of "brimstone and fire" although not mentioned in the sacred narrative. The large number of bitumen pits which existed in the valley (see ch. xiv. 10.) indicate the volcanic character of the district, and, indeed, throughout the whole valley of the Jordan volcanic traces are to be seen. The statement of the natives, that when the water was very low, they observed fragments of buildings and pillars, has not been verified by any traveller. (See *Reland*, Palestine, p. 257, *Maundrell*, Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 454.) The question whether the waters of the deep northern part of the lake were salty before the catastrophe of which the narrative speaks, or whether it obtained its present character at that time will probably never be satisfactorily answered. The water is perfectly clear and inodorous, but in taste is said to "resemble in nauseousness that of a solution of alum, and is so bitter and pungent, that it causes painful itching and even ulceration on the lips, and if brought near a wound produces a most excruciating sensation. It contains the *muratic* and *sulphuric acids*; and it consists of salt to about one-fourth its weight." Another remarkable circumstance connected with the water is its great buoyancy. Josephus observes, that the most weighty substance thrown into it will not sink; and that the Emperor Vespasian to test its strength, caused certain men who could not swim to be thrown in with their hands tied behind them, and they floated on the surface. This statement has been attested by many travellers. Thus, for instance, Mr. Stephens remarks: "I can almost corroborate the most extravagant accounts of the ancients. Before I left Jerusalem, I had resolved not to bathe in it on account of my health, and I had sustained my resolution during the whole of my day's ride along its shores, but on the point of turning up among the mountains, I could resist no longer. My clothes seemed to come off of their own accord;

and before Paul had time to ask me what I was going to do, I was floating on its waters. Paul and the Arabs followed; and after splashing about for a while, we lay like a parcel of corks upon its surface." There is another remarkable circumstance connected with this wonderful lake. The river Jordan and many other streams empty themselves into it, but there is no apparent outlet; the question, therefore, how the superfluous water is disposed of, has proved a puzzle to explorers. Some have supposed that there must be a subterranean outlet, but as there is not the slightest trace of such an outlet to be found, others are of opinion that the superfluous water is entirely carried off by evaporation. Most writers favour now the latter supposition, although it has been calculated that the Jordan alone discharges daily about 6,999,000 tons of water into it, besides what it receives from the river Arnon and some other streams. The lake being shut in on both sides by high mountains; those on the east side rising 2,000 feet above its level, its surface remains unruffled, and a death-like silence hangs over it. The atmosphere is heavy and oppressive, and it is said, that those who navigate it, "experience a paralysing drowsiness, thirst, and giddiness." Travellers have also some times noticed a noxious smell resembling that of *sulphuretted hydrogen*. There exists a very common belief that the exhalations of the lake are fatal, and that birds flying across drop dead. This, modern travellers have proved to be without any foundation. Mr. Stephens saw a flock of gulls floating quietly on the surface. Maundrell says he saw several birds flying about and skimming the surface without the slightest harm. Other travellers have frequently seen swallows dipping for the water necessary to build their nests. There are, however, no fish in the lake. "I am well convinced," says Mr. Madden, "both from my own observations, and from the account of the Arabs, that no living creature is to be found in the Dead Sea." (Travels, vol. 2, p. 210.) Josephus mentions that the waters of the sea change their appearance three times every day, and reflect different colours from the rays of the sun, and the same has been noticed by modern travellers. In the morning the water is almost black; this may be caused by the dense fog hanging over the sea; at noon, it is pale blue; whilst at sunset it assumes a reddish or yellowish colour. We must here not omit to notice the remarkable fruit which grows on the shore of the Dead Sea, and is commonly known as the *apple of Sodom*, generally supposed to be the fruit of the *Asclepias gigantea*, though some writers call it *Solanum Sodomaeum*. It is described as having all the appearance of the most inviting apple, but is filled with a nauseous and bitter dust only.

The deceptive appearance of the fruit it often alluded to by moralists and poets, thus for instance, Milton, in whose infernal regions—

"A grove sprung up—laden with fair fruit—
Greedily they pluck'd
The fruitage, fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake, where Sodom flam'd.
This, more delusive, not to touch, but taste
Deceived. They fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
With spattering noise rejected :"—

26. *And his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*

"Looked back from behind him." This implies that she followed the steps of her husband, as is still the custom in the East at the present time. Some critics have conjectured that instead of *מֵאַחֲרָיו* (*meacharav*) "from behind him," the original reading may have been *אַחֲרֶיהָ* (*achareha*), "behind her"; but the present reading is no doubt the original one, and such an emendation of the text would be altogether gratuitous. The sacred narrative does not inform us what induced Lot's wife to look back. It may have been out of curiosity which, like the curiosity of Eve, was too strong for her faith; or, it may have been from a longing for the earthly possessions which she reluctantly left behind her; or, to see whether the threatened destruction of Sodom had actually taken place. Whatever her motive may have been, it can in nowise mitigate her guilt; she acted in defiance of God's direct command. The command was a test of obedience: it was an easy test, and involved neither hardship nor self-denial.

"And she became a pillar of salt." Some writers explain the phrase to mean, that she was suffocated and gradually became encrusted by the floating vapour. Travellers declare that their "clothes, hats, hands, and faces, were impregnated by salt in less than two hours." And they also speak of lumps of salt in the shape of pillars being still to be seen in the vicinity of the Dead Sea. Some writers have conjectured, that as salt is sometimes used to express *perpetuity*, the phrase, "pillar of salt," may be merely equivalent to a *perpetual pillar* or *lasting monument*. In support of this supposition they appeal to Num. xviii. 19; 2 Chron. xiii. 5; but in these passages the word *עוֹלָם* (*olam*) "for ever," is added: "it is a covenant of salt forever." The expression, "covenant of salt," originated from salt being added to the sacrifice, and in concluding a solemn agreement, a sacrifice was offered. Most commentators very properly explain the phrase that she was actually turned

into a pillar of salt, and the author of the apocryphal book, "The Wisdom of Solomon," remarks, "and a standing pillar of salt is a monument of an unbelieving soul." (Wisdom of Solomon, x. 7.) Josephus remarks that Lot's wife was changed into a pillar of salt, for I have seen it, and it remains to this day." (Ant. book I. ch. xi. par. 4.)

Clement of Rome, who lived about the time of Josephus, also declares that it was standing in his time. Irenæus, who lived about a century later, states that it still existed in his time, and some modern travellers even relate of its being there at the present time. It is, however, not at all unlikely that Josephus and all others who profess to have seen it, were imposed upon by the natives who constantly play upon the credulity of strangers by pointing out objects of antiquity which have no claim whatever to it. They had, no doubt, a pillar of salt pointed out to them as being the pillar into which Lot's wife was turned, but which may have been naturally formed like many others of the same kind still to be seen.

The narrative now returns again to Abraham, who according to the last verse of the preceding chapter, had "returned to his place," after he had finished his intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah.

27. And Abraham repaired early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord :

When the kind-hearted patriarch by his earnest intercession had reduced the number of "righteous," for whose sake God would spare Sodom, to ten, he, no doubt, hoped that the city was now secure, that surely ten righteous persons would be found among its inhabitants. Still, as the wickedness of the place was so great, his mind was not at ease, lest even that small number might be wanting, and that his kinsman and family might be involved in the destruction of the place. This thought must have been the cause of deep anxiety to Abraham, and accordingly we find him, early in the morning, repairing to the same spot where, the day before, he had pleaded with the LORD, in order to ascertain the effect of his intercession.

Who can picture to himself the intense grief and bitter disappointment of the good patriarch when he saw the whole district enveloped in smoke. No doubt, when this dreadful sight burst upon his view his first words must have been: "What, not ten righteous persons to be found in all the cities of the plain? And, after all, my intercession has been fruitless." But although the guilty cities, with their depraved inhabitants had been forever swept from the face of the earth, the righteous patriarch's prayer was not in vain, for when God destroyed the cities He "remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out from the

midst of the overthrow," (v. 29.) It was, therefore, Abraham's prayer of faith that preserved Lot.

30. *And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.*

When Lot had to leave Sodom in haste to escape destruction, he looked upon Zoar as a convenient and suitable place of refuge; but when he saw the flames spreading wider and wider, or the waters coming nearer and nearer to him, he did no longer consider it safe to remain in a place situated so low, he, therefore, hastened to the mountain of Moab, and took up his abode in a cave. This mountain or hill country borders on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. The remaining verses of the chapter contain an account of the detestable conduct of Lot's two daughters. And here again we have an illustration of the evil influences of bad society: even the daughters of righteous Lot were contaminated by it. No doubt Lot had striven to make the inmates of his house walk in the fear of God, but by the intercourse with the Sodomites, they became imbued with their sinful character. It is impossible to find any adequate apology for the atrocious crime committed by Lot's daughters. The only thing that might probably be urged in mitigation is, that they had laboured under the false impression that the earth was visited with a second judgment, this time by fire, and all human beings had perished except their father and themselves, and in order to save the human family from extinction, they acted as they did. That apparently they entertained such a thought would appear from what the elder sister said: "Our father is old, and *there is* not a man on the earth to come to us." (v. 31.) The sacred narrative, however, is careful to indicate that Lot did not designedly participate in the heinous transaction, but that he was a mere instrument, his daughters having made him drink wine so that they might successfully carry out their design, knowing that their father in his proper senses would with indignation reject their wicked proposal. "He knew not when she lay down, nor when she arose," some writers explain these words, that "he did not distinguish the person either on her approach or her departure;" but we think the meaning which the sacred writer wishes to convey rather, is, that he was entirely unconscious of what was going on. The literal rendering of the original is: "He did not know in her laying down and in her rising up;" that is, he had no perception of the matter from first to last. But when we come to consider Lot's conduct in allowing himself to be induced to indulge in drinking to such

an extent that he became unconscious of what he was doing, and that not only once but on two successive nights, we certainly cannot hold him blameless in this instance. Here again we see *crime* and *drunkenness* go hand in hand. The eldest daughter bore a son, and called his name Moab; and the younger also bore a son, and called his name Ben-ammi. From the giving of these names, we must either conclude that Lot's daughters were utterly devoid of shame, or that they looked upon their conduct rather as praiseworthy than otherwise, for the import of the names will always recall to the mind the incestuous connection. The name מואב (*Moab*) denotes *from the father*, and בן עמי (*Ben-ammi*) signifies *son of my people*, or *son of my family*. From the former descended the Moabites, and from the latter the Ammonites. We must here not omit to notice the view so boldly set forth in the writings of some eminent scholars belonging to the new school of criticism. They hold the account of Lot's daughters incest to be mere fiction, and to have been introduced into the narrative as a brand upon the Moabites and Ammonites, the great enemies of the Hebrews. But those writers have altogether lost sight of the fact, that the animosity, which afterwards sprung up between the Israelites and those nations, did not originate from any hostile feeling on the part of the former, but arose from the unfriendly and invidious spirit which the latter evinced against the Israelites. This hostile feeling showed itself first when they refused to furnish the Hebrews with provisions on their journey through the wilderness, and afterwards again in hiring Balaam to come and curse them. It was on account of these inimical acts that the Ammonites and Moabites were forbidden to enter into the congregation of the LORD even unto the tenth generation, and that they were not to be received as friends or allies. (Deut. xxiii. 3-6.) But there is not the slightest indication of a desire on the part of the Hebrews to disavow the relationship existing between themselves and those people, or that they taunted them with their incestuous descent. On the contrary, the near relationship is openly acknowledged, and the Israelites were forbidden to distress or to meddle with them, because their territory had been given to the children of Lot. (See Deut. ii. 9-19.) The open declaration of relationship between the Hebrews and their implacable enemies the Moabites and the Ammonites, is an incontestible proof of the impartiality of the Mosiac narrative.

We may here, *en passant*, mention an ingenious conjecture of Michaelis. He thinks that a part of Lot's flock may have

מאב another form for מואב

been pasturing in some district sufficiently remote from the scene of destruction, and thus escaped in being involved in the ruin. It is argued in support of this conjecture, that if Lot had lost all his effects, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have appealed to Abraham, his noble-hearted kinsman, for aid. After this, Lot's name is not mentioned again: not even his death is recorded.

CHAPTER XX.

1. *And Abraham journeyed from there towards the country of the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.*

2. *And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister; and Abimelech King of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.*

"And Abraham journeyed from there," namely, from the oak-grove of Mamre, where he had dwelt for a considerable time, and had made friends and allies. The sacred narrative does not inform us why he removed from the place which, from the repeated Divine manifestations there, must have become especially endeared to him, but most likely it was that the pasturage was becoming scarce. He took his journey southward, stopping at different places between Kadesh and Shur, until he at last reached Gerar, the metropolis of the country of the Philistines, where he took up his temporary abode. The city was situated in the deep Vadi of Gerar, where Rowland discovered the ruins of an ancient city, called Khirbeth el Gerar, about eight miles S. S. E. of Gaza. Here Abraham had recourse for the second time to the expedient of equivocating in regard to his real relationship to Sarah. A fear, whether real or imaginary, that the people would kill him in order to obtain possession of his wife seized him, and he resorted again to the ignoble device by asserting that she was his sister. The guilt in this instance is greatly aggravated from his having on a former occasion (ch. xii., 10-20) had such a direct proof of Divine protection, and which ought to have inspired him with the assurance that God would also now shield him from the evil designs of the people. It matters not what idea he may have entertained as to the licentious character or barbarous state of the inhabitants, his faith in God's power to protect him ought to have been strong enough to dispel all fear of evil. It is impossible, therefore, to find any

apology for Abraham's conduct on this occasion, and only shows the exceeding proneness of human nature to err. That we here find a king of a different country acting in a similar manner as Pharaoh, king of Egypt, on a previous occasion, is a striking proof of the existence of the privilege—as we have stated in our remarks on ch. xii., 15, p. 310—which the kings of some eastern countries enjoyed of claiming the unmarried sister or daughter of any of their subjects for their harem. And hence, when Abimelech took Sarah, he justified himself that he had done so "in the integrity of his heart and innocence of his hands," (v. 5), supposing Abraham to be her brother, and therefore had a right to act as he did. The name אֲבִימֶלֶךְ Abimelech, denotes *father king*, probably indicating that the rule of the king was to be of a *paternal* character. "Abimelech" appears to have been the title of the kings of Gerar, just as Pharaoh was the title of the kings of Egypt.

3. *But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, Behold thou art but a dead man, because of the woman whom thou hast taken ; for she is a husband's wife.*

God once more rescues Sarah by his direct intervention from the danger into which the untruthful statement of her husband and herself had placed her. "God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night," which in the Chaldee Version is paraphrased, "the word from the presence of God came to Abimelech in a vision of the night." "And God said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man," meaning, that he would surely bring death upon himself, unless he restored the woman unharmed to her husband.

4. *But Abimelech had not come near her : and he said, Lord, wilt thou also slay an innocent nation ?*

"Wilt thou also slay an innocent nation?" In these words Abimelech evidently alludes to the destruction of the cities of the plain, the word גַּם (*gam*) "also" clearly shows that such was the case. It is as if he had said, surely the destruction of that impious nation was just, but we are not such a nation of evil doers, and what I have now done was in ignorance, having been misled by their misrepresenting their true relationship (v. 5.), surely thou wilt not slay an innocent people as if it were guilty? Both in the Authorized and the Revised Versions it is rendered "wilt thou also slay a righteous nation," but this rendering renders the passage very ambiguous, for, it is hardly reasonable to suppose that Abimelech would presume to speak of his people as altogether free from moral evil so as to call them "a righteous nation," but what he meant to say was rather, that

he and his people were innocent, not having knowingly done wrong in this instance. The word צדיק (*tsaddick*) righteous, is sometimes used in the sense of innocent, and so in our verse it has been rendered by many German commentators. Thus, for example, von Bohlen, "*ein unschuldiges Volk*," an innocent nation. God, who knows the thoughts of the heart, admits Abimelech's plea of ignorance: "Yea,* I indeed know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart. (v. 6.)

7. *Now, therefore, restore the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou dost not restore her, know that thou shalt surely die, thou and all that are thine.*

"For he is a prophet," the Hebrew for prophet is נביא (*navi*), and is derived from נבא (*nava*), synonymous to נבע (*nava*), to gush forth, to utter words with fervour, the meaning of the word is, one who speaks as God's ambassador. Thus, Exod vii. 1, we read: "And the LORD said to Moses, see, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." That is, Moses shall act with regard to Pharaoh as the direct representative and messenger of God, and Aaron was to act as his spokesman, or, as it is expressed in chap. iv. 16, "He shall indeed be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." Abraham is here called "a prophet," not in the common acceptance of the term as one foretelling future events, but as one who is the recipient of Divine revelations, and who stands in a specially near relation to God. "And he shall pray for thee." It appears from other passages of Scripture that in later times, it was also a special work of the prophets to make intercession for others. Thus we read, Jer. xxvii. 13: "But if they be prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts." (Compare also chap. vii. 16, chap. xiv. 11.) Forgiveness is also more readily granted if prayed for by the injured party. Thus Eliphaz the Tamarite and his two friends were commanded to take seven bullocks and seven rams and go to Job, and offer them up for a burnt-offering, "and my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept." (Job xlii. 8.)

9. *Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I sinned against thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.*

אָנֹכִי יָדַעְתִּי (*anochi yadati*), lit. "I, I know;" but the repetition of the pronoun in full before the verb, makes the phrase emphatic, as *I, even I, know*, or *I indeed know*. Such constructions are very common.

What a noble example of forbearance does this heathen prince here set us. Notwithstanding the injury he had sustained, and the great danger to which he and all his household had been exposed, there is not the slightest expression of anger or ill-feeling towards him who was the cause of it, but the mildest reproof. It has indeed been justly remarked, that "were we to judge simply from this portion of the sacred narrative, we would perhaps be inclined to think that Abraham had been the heathen, and Abimelech the prophet of the Lord." But still more astounding is the great abhorrence which this heathen prince evinces of a sin, which, in our civilized and enlightened age, is so frequently regarded with shameless indifference. Observe, Abimelech does not complain of the suffering to which he and his family had been subjected, (see v. 17,) but "what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom *"a great sin?"*

11. *And Abraham said, Because "I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.*

No doubt Abraham felt the justice of the reproof, and was heartily ashamed of his conduct. He found it necessary to offer at least some excuse to the king, and now gives as a reason for misrepresenting his relationship to Sarah, that he thought "the fear of God" was not in the place; but this is but a feeble excuse, for it could have been merely a surmise. He had no grounds for supposing that the people of Gerar were more depraved than the other heathen people among whom he had been sojourning. But, even if such a fear had taken hold of his mind, he should have trusted in God for further protection. He also informed the king that, after all, he had told the truth when he said that she was his sister, since she was the daughter of his father, but not the daughter of his mother (v. 12.) But then he told only part of the truth, and just withheld that part which would have prevented Abimelech from taking Sarah. The king showed his magnanimity still more by not only forgiving Abraham, but by making him also presents of "sheep and oxen, and manservants and maid-servants;" and by offering him the freedom of his country to dwell in it wherever he chose (vv. 14, 15.) Nor did his generosity stop here, but he made also a munificent present to Sarah.

* "I thought," Heb. אָמַרְתִּי (*amarti*) "I said;" but the verb (*amar*) to say, is often used for speaking in the mind, i.e., thinking, as here. So, also, Exod. ii. 14, "thinkest thou to kill me, Heb. אַתָּה אֹמֵר (*attah omer*) sayest thou to kill me. Homer, too, makes use of the expression: "He speaks to his mighty heart," i.e., he thought within himself.

16. *And to Sarah he said, Behold, I have given to thy brother a thousand shekels of silver: behold, it is for thee a covering of the eyes to all that are with thee, and with all thou art recognized.*

This verse has been variously interpreted. Some writers have erroneously explained that the "one thousand shekels of silver," were not a special present made to Sarah, but as the value of the presents made to Abraham; so, for instance, Keil and Delitzsch. Most commentators, however, very properly regard the thousand shekels of silver given to Abraham as a present to Sarah. This supposition is clearly supported both by the language and context; and further, it is not likely that Abimelech would tell Sarah the value of the presents he made to her husband. The sum, 1,000 shekels, or about \$500 of our money, appears also to be too small a sum as the value of the sheep, and oxen, and men servants and maid servants. "I have given to thy brother." Abimelech evidently calls Abraham her brother, because she had represented him to be such, and probably was at the same time intended as a mild and delicate rebuke for having deceived him. "Behold it is for thee a covering of the eyes." Some writers, as, for instance, Eben Ezra, Ewald, and Kalisch, refer the pronoun הוּ (hu) to Abraham, and render, "he is to thee a covering of the eyes," which is also the rendering given in the Authorized Version, and in the margin of the Revised Version. The meaning, according to this rendering, would be, "thy brother" (Abraham) is a *protector* to thee, who is able to protect thee from any impertinence, and guard thy honour. The reader will, however, perceive that by reading "he is" instead of "it is," there would then be no reason assigned for the giving of the thousand* shekels. Most versions and interpreters very properly refer the pronoun הוּ (hu) to the silver, and render "it is." Many commentators explain the phrase כְּסוּת עֵינַיִם "a covering of the eyes," to mean a *gift* for the anxiety she suffered, or a self-imposed atonement gift made to her. But the more common interpretation of the phrase, and which the language certainly at once suggests, is, that it means a *veil*, that the money was given to supply Sarah with a *veil* or *veils*, so that she might be recognized as a married woman. It seems to have been customary in those early times for married women to wear veils, while unmarried women did not cover the face. Thus, according to ch. xxiv., 15, 16, 17, Rebekah's face was then uncovered, but according to v. 65, when she was

* The Hebrew term שֶׁקֶל (*shekel*) *shekel* is derived from שָׁקַל (*shakal*) to weigh, because originally the value of money was reckoned by weight. From the Hebrew word probably comes our word *scale*. In Chaldee it is called סַלְעִין (*salin*), and from which may be derived our word *shilling*.

about to meet Isaac, she put on a veil, indicating thereby that she had become his wife. Abimelech in thus giving Abraham money to buy Sarah a veil, or veils, administered a delicate reproof to Sarah that she ought to observe the common customs, and that she might then be easily recognized as a married woman. The objection urged by some that a thousand shekels of silver was an exorbitant price for a veil, is of not much weight, the money may have been intended to supply a veil whenever one was wanted, and we need not suppose that Abimelech intended that the whole sum should be appropriated to the purchase of veils, but gave the large sum as becoming the dignity of a king. "To all that *are* with thee," i.e., the veil will be a mark that you are a married woman to all that may fall in with you, "and with all **thou art* recognized," that is, all will at once recognize you as being married.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. *And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as He had spoken.*

Abraham's enduring faith, and patient waiting for the accomplishment of God's promise, were now fully rewarded. In his hundredth year the promised son was born to him, exactly at the time foretold by God, (ch. xvii. 17, 21). "And the Lord visited Sarah," that is, in order to fulfil His promise. God is spoken of in Scripture as *visiting* either to *show mercy* or to *fulfil a promise*; thus Gen. i. 24, Joseph tells his brothers: "God will surely visit you"; or to *visit* in order to *punish*, as (Psalm lxxxix. 33; Eng. Ver. v. 32,) "Then will I visit their transgression."

3. *And Abraham called the name of his son that was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac.*

Abraham bestowed the name Isaac in obedience to the direct command of God, (ch. xvii., 19.) The name יצחק (*yitschak*), Isaac, denotes *laughter*.

*The word נֹחַחַת (*nochachath*), the 2nd pers. fem. Niph. of יָחַח (*yachach*), has been differently rendered, but the rendering we have given is best suited to the context, and is adopted by Vater, De Wette, Von Bohlen, and many other commentators.

6. *And Sarah said, Laughter hath God prepared for me; all who hear it will laugh with me.*

"Laughter hath God prepared for me." It is a laughter arising out of great joy. It is not an uncommon thing for Orientals to express themselves in this manner when an unexpected event happens to them. If a person, for instance, has obtained anything which he did not expect, he will say, "What is this? I am made to laugh."—"All who hear *it* will laugh with me:" it is, will sympathize in my great joy at the unexpected and miraculous birth of a son. Some of our modern commentators have rendered יצחק לי (*yitschak li*) "by laugh" or "mock at me," but surely, though any one might wonder at such an extraordinary occurrence, there was certainly nothing to mock at.

8. *And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.*

Our text does not state at what age Isaac was weaned, but it was probably when he was three years old, for it seems to be customary among most Oriental people to suckle their children much longer than with us. Traces of this practice are to be found in the Scriptures. Thus when Samuel was weaned, he was then sufficiently old enough to be left with Eli for the service of the tabernacle. (See 1 Sam. i. 22, *et seq.*) In 2 Macc. vii. 27, the mother of the seven brethren slain in one day by Antiochus for refusing to eat swine's flesh, in exhorting her youngest son not to listen to the promises of the tyrant, but to follow the example of his brothers, and to die rather than break the commandment of Moses, addressed him as follows: "O my son have pity upon me that bore thee nine months in my womb, *and gave thee suck three years*, and nourished thee, and brought thee up." A Persian ambassador to England stated, that "in his country male children are often kept to the breast till three years old, *and never taken from it till two years and two months.*" And he attributes the greater forwardness of European children to the practice of early weaning. In India the time is three years. But girls are everywhere weaned earlier. (See also Russel's Nat. Hist. of Aleppo. Germ. Edit. i. 427. Mungo Park, Travels 237) "Abraham made a great feast." According to modern travellers this is still customary in the East. (See Moriers, 2nd Journey, 114. Schubert's Travels, ii. 48).

9. *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.*

Commentators are not agreed as to the proper import of the word *מצחק* (*mitsachek*) here employed. It is, however, derived from the root *צחק* (*tsachak*), to laugh, from the same root as the name *יצחק* Isaac is derived, and therefore, the most likely meaning of it is *laughing at, mocking, or deriding*. Indeed, it is well worthy of notice here, that in ch. xxxix. 14, 17, the same verb is employed to express *the grossest insult*. When Potiphar's wife falsely accuses Joseph, she says, the Hebrew servant came in unto me *לצחק* (*letsachek*) to mock me." We may, therefore, well conclude that the conduct of Ishmael who was then upwards of sixteen years old (comp. xvii. 25) was of a highly vexatious and insulting nature. The translations of the Septuagint and Vulgate Versions, "Sarah saw Ishmael play with her son Isaac," are altogether inappropriate. The mere childish gambols of children would be too trivial an occasion to induce Sarah to have recourse to such a harsh measure as to demand the expulsion of Ishmael. Some of the Rabbinic writers make mention of Sarah having discovered in Ishmael a disposition to idolatry and various vices. We do not know upon what authority they made this statement, most likely mere conjecture: certainly it is not supported by the text. We think, we may safely conclude, that Ishmael's conduct on the occasion may be ascribed to jealousy. Up to fourteen years of his age he regarded himself as the sole heir of his father, but saw himself now superseded by his younger brother. His jealousy was most likely aroused on seeing the great care and affection lavished on Isaac. The wild and ungovernable character ascribed to him and his descendants (ch. xvi. 12) began already to develop itself, he indulged in mockery against Isaac, or as the apostle Paul expresses it, "persecuted" him. (Gal. iv. 29.) Sarah had, no doubt, much cause to be offended at Ishmael's conduct, and seeing no other way of restoring again her domestic peace than by the expulsion of her hand-maid and her son, demanded of her husband that both be sent away.

11. *And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight on account of his son.*

Sarah's demand naturally was exceedingly distressing to the good patriarch. The feelings of a father could not be so easily stifled, his affections for his son would make him shrink from taking such a harsh step, and he refused this time to accede to his wife's wishes.

12. *And God said to Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bond-woman ; in all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken to her voice ; for by Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

From this verse we learn that it was by the direct command of God only that Abraham acceded to the wishes of Sarah, and at once exculpates the patriarch from the charge made against him by many writers, that "his conduct towards Hagar and Ishmael was unfeeling, unworthy alike of a kind master and an affectionate father." It has been well remarked on our verse, that "God does not require Abraham to acquiesce in Sarah's proposal, because he approved the spirit which prompted it, but because it accorded with his counsel and his repeated declarations that all the blessings of the covenant were to belong permanently to Isaac." The expulsion of Ishmael, by the providence of God, was also ultimately beneficial to him, as it had the direct tendency to form his character and that of his descendants, and tend to their national distinction as declared in chapter xvi. 1-13.

14. *And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the young man, and sent her away : and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.*

From the statement, that "Abraham rose up early in the morning," we may infer, that he had received the Divine direction in a vision during the night. It also shows the eagerness of the patriarch to obey the will of God, although it must have been a heartrending ordeal to part with his son. "And he took bread." The word *לֶחֶם* (*lechem*) "bread," no doubt here means, as it often does in other places, food of various kinds, and these were, we may rest assured, of as large a quantity as they could possibly carry. "And a bottle of water." The Hebrew word *חֶמֶת* (*chemeth*) denotes a leathern bottle, which was generally made of goat skin, though sometimes, especially the larger bottles, were made of the skins of other animals. Eastern travellers mention, that all those that lead a wandering life, keep their water, milk, and other liquids, in leathern bottles, and that they keep more fresh in them, than in other vessels. Such leathern bottles were also used by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, and we think are still used in some parts of Spain, where they are called *borrachas*. From the monuments of Egypt, the sculptures of Mesopotamia, and the relics of Herculaneum, we not only learn the different shapes of bottles that were used, but that some of them were both elegant and costly. Hagar's

bottle was, no doubt, made of a kid-skin, and was slung across her back from her shoulder. "And the young man," the Hebrew word ילך (*yeled*), rendered in the Authorized Version by "child," and which is no doubt admissible, yet is here more appropriately rendered, either by *lad* or *young man*, as Ishmael at the time was at least sixteen years old. He was circumcised when thirteen years old, and Isaac was born one year afterwards, and weaned when about three years old. The word ילך (*yeled*) is often used in the sense of a *young man*; thus Joseph is (ch. xxxvii. 30) spoken of as a ילך (*yeled*), though he is said (v. 2) to have been "seventeen years old." The young friends and advisers of Rehoboam are called ילדים (*yeladim*), 1 Kings xii. 8, 10, where the English Version has properly rendered the word "young men." The foregoing remarks will show how absurd it is to explain as is generally done, that Ishmael was also put on Hagar's shoulder. The phrase "and the young man," refers to the verb וַיִּיתֶן (*vaiyitten*), "and he gave," and not to שָׂם עַל שִׁכְמָהּ (*sam al shichmah*), "putting on her shoulder." The lad was led by the hand. (v. 18.) "Beer-sheba" denotes *well of an oath*, or *well of the seven*, and received its name on account of the covenant concluded between Abraham and Abimelech. (See vv. 30, 31.) Beer-sheba was situated about fifty miles south-west from Jerusalem, on the southern border of Palestine, and was the limit in that direction of the Israelitish dominion. It was one of the most ancient and interesting places in sacred record. Two circular wells of pure water, the largest about forty-four feet deep to the surface of the water, and about thirteen feet in diameter, and a heap of ruins about a quarter of a mile broad, are the only remains to mark the site where Beer-sheba stood. It is by the Arabians still called Bir-es-seba. By "the wilderness of Beer-sheba," is probably meant the desert track of country lying beyond Beer-sheba toward the wilderness of Paran; and it is to the latter place that Hagar with her son afterwards went and dwelt there. We may also remark that the English terms *wilderness*, *desert*, do not always convey a correct sense of the Hebrew word מִדְבָּר (*midbar*), which properly denotes *an uncultivated tract of land*, *an open country*, or *open fields*, adapted for pasture; hence we have in Scripture such expressions as "the pastures of the wilderness;" Ps. lxxv. 13; (Eng. Vers. v. 12;) "the wilderness and its cities." (Is. xlii. v. 2.) In fact the word מִדְבָּר (*midbar*), is derived from the verb דָּבַר (*davar*), *to lead*, *to guide*, from cattle being led there for pasturage. In the East, uncultivated lands and extensive plains, from the excessive heat and long drought, soon become barren, hence the word is also employed sometimes to denote a sterile region. The use of the Hebrew word *midbar*, does, therefore, not

necessarily imply that the place denoted thereby is void of vegetation.

It is well known that even the desert of Arabia, which is entirely burned up with excessive drought in summer, furnishes, after the autumnal rains, plenty of pasture for the flocks of the Bedouins during the entire winter and spring. Hagar probably intended to return to Egypt, her native country, but lost her way in the trackless desert.

15. *And when the water was spent in the bottle, she placed the young man under one of the shrubs.*

Before Hagar had reached any inhabited place, the supply of water in the bottle gave out, and the lad being overcome with thirst, and no longer able to walk, his vital power beginning to fail, she laid him down under a shrub, which at least afforded a little shelter from the scorching rays of the sun. All travelers who have made a journey through an Eastern desert, declare that to be thirsty in a desert without water, exposed to the burning sun, is one of the greatest sufferings that a human being can sustain. The rendering, "and she cast the child under one of the shrubs," given in the Authorized Version and also in the Revised Version, leads to the supposition that Hagar had carried Ishmael also, but we have above shown that, from his age at that time, such could not have been the case. The verb שָׁלַח (*shalach*,) has various shades of signification, and is evidently here used in the sense to *lay down*, namely, Hagar laid the exhausted young man down on the ground. So chap. xxxvii. 22, where Reuben is proposing to his brothers to put Joseph into a pit, in order that he might afterwards deliver him to his father, and where the same verb is used, we need not suppose that the verb is employed in a stronger sense than to *put* or *place*.

16. *And she went, and sat down opposite him, at a distance, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, I will not see the death of the youth. And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.*

The great distress of Hagar, and the intense suffering of her son, cannot fail to enlist commiseration. It is indeed natural that it should do so. At the same time we must bear in mind, that this awful visitation was no doubt intended as a punishment for their reprehensible conduct. Both mother and son had grossly insulted those to whom respect and veneration was due. Hagar despised Sarah, and Ishmael mocked Isaac. But by the mercy of God, the punishment was of but a short duration, and limited to the mere apprehension of a danger which never came to pass. "As it were a bow-shot," i. e., as

far as the arrow flies. Another mode of expressing a short distance is, "it is a call off," i. e., as far as a man's voice can be heard.

17. *And God heard the voice of the youth ; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, What aileth thee Hagar ? Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the youth where he is.*

18. *Arise, lift up the youth, and hold him by thy hand ; for I shall make him a great nation.*

19. *And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water ; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the youth to drink.*

Ishmael as the son of Abraham was destined to become the progenitor of a great nation ; when, therefore, his suffering from thirst seemed nearly to overwhelm him, God sent His angel to rescue him. "Lift up the youth, and hold him by the hand ;" literally "strengthen thy hand upon him," that is, assist and support him. "And God opened her eyes"—an idiomatic expression denoting *to bring under notice*—she now saw a well which before had escaped her notice. So, Num. xxii. 11, it is said, that "the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way ;" i. e., he was now enabled to see, what he had not before observed.

20. *And God was with the youth ; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became a great archer.*

"God was with the youth," that is, made him to prosper. "Became a great archer," this does not only mean that he became expert in using the bow, but is also expressive of his warlike character. He finally took up his abode in the great desert of Paran, now called *et Tih*. The narrative also informs us, that "his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt" (v. 21). This is quite according to the Eastern custom, where the parents, especially the mother selects the partners for her children, and also makes the preliminary arrangements, excepting the fixing of the dowry, which is generally done by the father.

It has been well remarked that Ishmael who was emphatically a son of the desert, and leading a wild life, and yet bowed to the will of his mother in the choice of a wife, indicates, in a striking manner, the fixedness of Oriental customs.

22. *And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his army spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest :*

23. *And now swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my offspring, nor with my progeny; but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do to me, and to the land wherein thou sojournest.*

It is evident from this passage that Abimelech had become greatly impressed by the miraculous care with which God guarded Abraham. He may also have heard of the extraordinary birth of a son to him in his and his wife's old age, and most probably also of the promise that his seed should possess the land of Canaan. Under these circumstances it was therefore expedient on the part of the Philistine king to seek the alliance of a man standing so high in the favour of God, and on whom such great blessings are showered. Abimelech asking Abraham to swear that his friendship might not only be extended to himself but to every member and branch of his family down to later generations, clearly indicates that he must have been aware of the promise made to Abraham that his seed was hereafter to possess the land of Canaan, for from Abraham himself, who was then upwards of a hundred years old, his descendants could have nothing to fear. The words *ולנכדך ולנכדי* (*ulenini ulenechdi*), which I have rendered "nor with my offspring, nor with my progeny," is, in the Authorized Version, rendered, "nor with my son, nor with my son's son," having adopted the rendering given in the Targum of Onkelos (Chaldee Version). *ברי ובר ברי* (*beri uvar beri*) "my son and my son's son." But the phrase *נך ונכד* (*nin weneched*), *progeny and offspring or posterity*, is a proverbial expression, denoting *member and branch to a later generation*. Thus, Is. xiv. 22, it is foretold concerning Babylon: "And I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon, name and remnant, *רנך ונכד* (*wenin waneched*) and offspring and progeny," in the Authorized Version again "son and son's son." In order to conclude a covenant with Abraham, Abimelech accompanied by his chief captain Phichol—probably as a witness—went to Beer-sheba where the patriarch was then dwelling. But before Abraham concluded the covenant he complained to the king that his servants had violently taken possession of a well which he had dug.

This was a serious loss to Abraham, who was possessor of much cattle. Indeed, the taking possession of a well in those arid regions, has frequently led to bitter strife among whole tribes. Abimelech was very indignant at what his servants had done, and assured Abraham that this was the first time he had heard of it; and as a matter of course commanded that the well be restored. In order, however, to insure the possession of the well more securely to himself and his descendants,

and to prevent a similar occurrence in future, Abraham made Abimelech take from him "seven lambs," as a witness that he had dug the well, and was the rightful owner of it (vv. 28-31). The lambs being seven in number, imparted additional solemnity to the transaction, as the number seven was regarded a sacred number. Among the ancient Arabians there existed apparently a custom when entering upon a solemn agreement, to draw a little blood by making an incision in one of the hands, and smear it on seven stones. (Herod. iii. 8.)

33. *And Abraham planted a tamarisk in Beer-sheba, and there called on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.*

The Hebrew term *אֵשֶׁל* (*eshel*), rendered in the Authorized Version simply by "a grove," unquestionably denotes a *tamarisk*, but may probably be used here in a collective sense for a *tamarisk grove*. The use of groves as places of worship became afterwards very common among all nations. As the idolatrous worship carried on in those groves, however, became attended by the most abominable practices, the offering of sacrifices in groves was forbidden under the Mosaic law. (See Deut. xvi. 21). And the pious kings showed their zeal for maintaining the true worship of Jehovah by cutting down the groves where the people burned incense and offered sacrifices to idols. "And there called on the name of the Lord." The phrase *קרא בשם יהוה* (*kara beshem Jehovah*), to call on the name of the Lord, denotes offering up of prayer, and performing public worship in general.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. *And it came to pass after these things that God tried Abraham, and said to him, Abraham : and he said, Behold, here I am.*

2. *And He said, Take now thy son, thy only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and go to the land Moriah ; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee.*

The sacred narrative now brings before us one of the severest tests of obedience conceivable, and unmistakably shows that there is a faith which, while it unhesitatingly believes what God promises, also unhesitatingly obeys what God commands. Such faith was Abraham's. When God promised that he should have a son in his old age, his faith silenced all doubts that may have risen up in his mind as to the possibility of its

accomplishment. And now when the promise after patient waiting was at last fulfilled, and the son had grown up to a young man, and the happy patriarch in faith already saw himself "a father of a multitude of nations," he is commanded to slay the son, through whom alone God's promises made to him could be fulfilled. The Rev. Henry Blunt has, therefore, well observed: "What a dilemma was this even for the strongest faith? If Abraham believed the promises, he must almost necessarily have doubted the command; and if he believed the command, how could he have any reliance on the promises? But a strong faith does not reason; it believes, and it obeys." Appalled and deeply affected as Abraham must have been at the thought of the sacrifice required of him, and the intense pain and suffering he must inflict upon his beloved son, he hesitated not a moment to obey God's command, and still believed that the promises made to him would surely be fulfilled. "By faith," says the apostle Paul, "Abraham, when he was tried, offered Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: According that God *was* able to raise *him* up even from the dead." (Heb. xi. 17-19.) "God tried Abraham." The rendering in the Authorized Version, "God did tempt Abraham," may give rise to an erroneous impression, as the word tempt is usually employed in the sense to *persuade, to invite to sin*. The primary meaning of the term נִסָּה (*nissah*), and in which it is most frequently used is, to *put to the test, to try a person*. (Comp. Exod. xv. 25; Deut. xiii. 3); though it is sometimes employed also in reference to man tempting God by not believing or trusting in His power or assistance. (See Exod. xvii. 2; Deut. vi. 16). "Thy only one." Isaac was the only son of Sarah, and he was the heir of the promises. "The land of Moriah." It is the region round that mountain, and which was nearly a three days' journey from Beer-sheba. As regards the etymology of the name מֹרְיָה (*Moriyah*) Moriah, some critics regard it as a compound of מֹרִי יָה (*mori-yah*)

God is my instructor, from יָרָה (*arah*) one of the significations of which is, to *teach*. This derivation is certainly very appropriate for the mountain upon which afterwards the temple was built, and from which the knowledge of Jehovah was to be diffused over the earth. (Comp. Is. ii. 3.) Hengstenberg takes it as compounded of מֹרָאָה יָה (*moreh yah*), *shown by God*; whilst Gesenius regards it as compounded of מֹרְאֵי יָה (*mor-i yah*), *elected by God*.

More commonly, however, the name is interpreted to denote *Jehovah manifested*, and is no doubt used here proleptically.

in reference to the manifestation of God to Abraham when he was about offering up Isaac, and to which allusion is made in ver. 14. Onkelos, in his Chaldee Version renders *לְאָרֶץ פְּלִיחָנָא* (*learah pulchana*), to the land of worship. Moriah is one of the four hills upon which Jerusalem was built, the names of the other three are, Zion, Acra, and Bezetha. It is lower than mount Zion, which contained the upper city and the citadel. Acra, which lies north-west of Moriah, contained the lower city.

The valley which divided mount Zion from Acra and Moriah, is, by Josephus, called "the valley of the Cheesemongers." Across this valley Solomon appears to have raised a causeway leading from the royal palace on mount Zion to the temple on mount Moriah.

It was, no doubt, the greater height of mount Zion, that gave rise to the common usage of calling the mountain of the temple also by that name, and even the whole city being spoken of by that appellation. Thus the expression *בַּת צִיּוֹן* (*bath Zion*) lit. *daughter of Zion*, is poetically used for *inhabitants of Jerusalem*.

Abraham not only obeyed the command to offer up his beloved son, which involved also the duty to slay him with his own hands, but he obeyed promptly. He did not allow the affections of a father to influence him to delay its execution a moment longer than was absolutely necessary. He "rose up early in the morning," having received the command, as the context seems to indicate, during the night, and made the necessary preparation, and this being done, immediately set out on his journey, taking with him Isaac and two servants. He took also the wood with him, which was no doubt done as a precaution lest the locality did not furnish suitable or any wood at all.

4. *On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.*

"He saw the place afar off" As God had promised to show the mountain upon which Isaac was to be offered (ver. 2), we may infer that a visible sign was given, by which Abraham recognized the proper place. According to the Jewish tradition: "When God commanded Abraham to go to the place He would tell him of, and offer his son, he asked how he should know it? And the answer was: 'Wheresoever thou seest My glory, there will I stay and wait for thee.' And accordingly he now beheld a pillar of fire reaching from the heavens to the earth, and thereby knew that this was the place." (*Pirke Eliezer*).

5. *And Abraham said to his young men, "Remain ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder, and we will worship, and we will return to you."*

"And we will return." Some of our rationalistic writers have pointed to this statement as another act of deceit on the part of Abraham when he said "we will return," and went for the express purpose to offer up his son as a burnt-offering. Whilst some commentators have construed the language as an allowable dissimulation in order to quiet the minds of the young men. But the language neither implies deceit nor dissimulation, but is the language of a *strong faith*. The patriarch firmly believed that the Almighty who had so miraculously given him this son, in whom only His promises could be ratified, would in some way or other prevent his final loss. He either believed that God would interpose and prevent the sacrifice, or that He would raise him to life again.

6. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and the knife; and they went both of them together.*

As a burnt-offering required to be entirely consumed, the amount of wood required must have been considerable. But Isaac had now arrived at an adult age. Josephus gives it as twenty-five, whilst many commentators make it at thirty-three. The age assigned by Josephus is the most probable one, and is very commonly accepted.

7. *And Isaac spake to Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Behold, here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?*

8. *And Abraham said, My son, God will provide for Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: and they went both of them together.*

Isaac, at his age, must necessarily have become conversant with all the religious practices performed by his father, and learned their significance. He knew therefore, from the fire, wood, and knife, that his father was about to offer a sacrifice, and not seeing the animal to be offered, he naturally asked the question "but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" Oh, who can picture to himself the anguish that this dreadful question must have caused to the aged patriarch. How keenly must this soul stirring enquiry have put the faith of Abraham to the test. Bishop Hall has indeed well remarked. "If Abraham's heart could have known to relent, that question of his dear, innocent, and religious son, had melted it into compassion. 'My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the

sacrifice?' I know not whether that word, 'my father,' did not strike Abraham as deep as the knife of Abraham could strike his son; yet he doth not so much as think, still he persists and conceals, and where he meant not, prophecies, 'My son, God will provide a lamb for a burnt offering.'

9. *And they came to the place which God had told him; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order; and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar on the wood.*

10. *And Abraham stretched out his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.*

The appointed place had now been reached, but Abraham had not as yet informed his son of the Divine command he had received. But now the information could no longer be withheld that he was the destined victim. Josephus (Ant. B. I. ch. xiii. par. 3, 4.) gives a pathetic dialogue which passed between father and son on the occasion, but which is altogether imaginary. The sacred narrative passes the heart-rending scene over unnoticed, as if it were impossible for language to describe. And who can picture to himself the torment and anguish the father must have experienced whilst he was building the altar, arranging the wood, binding his son, and laying him on the altar, and finally stretching forth his hand to seize the knife to slay his beloved son? It may well be asked, what more was necessary to prove Abraham's faith and obedience? But whilst Abraham's conduct in this severe test calls for our highest admiration, we must not at the same time overlook Isaac's filial obedience and pious resignation to the Divine appointment. For we must take it for granted that he willingly submitted to become the victim to be offered, and without a murmur allowed himself to be bound on the altar. It must be remembered, that he was no more a child, but being about twenty-five years old, he was in the prime and vigor of life, and therefore could easily have resisted his aged father now a hundred and twenty-five years old. But he proved himself a worthy son of "the father of the faithful," and worthy to be the heir of the promise.

11. *And the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.*

12. *And He said, Lay not thy hand upon the youth, nor do to him anything: for now I know that thou fearest God, and thou hast not withheld thy son, thy only one, from Me.*

The stretching forth of the hand and taking the knife, was the completion of Abraham's obedience, and of his faith, and the sacrifice was regarded as having been actually consummated

in his heart. And now the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven "Lay not thy hand upon the youth, nor do to him anything, for now I know thou fearest God." Oh, what joyful words those must have been to him? Here again the context shows that "the angel of the LORD" is none other than God Himself, this is evident from the last clause of verse 12, "and hast not withheld thy son, thy only son from Me;" and also from Abraham calling the name of the place "Jehovah-jireh" (v. 14). "For now I know thou fearest God." As God is omniscient and knows the thoughts of man, He knew this before, and, indeed He had Himself already declared it (ch. xviii. 19). But what the language here simply intends to convey is, that he knew by a new proof, having put his faith and obedience to the severest trial possible. It must be remembered that God in His declarations often accommodates his language to human usages of speech, in order that they may be readily understood.

And here it is proper to offer a few remarks in reply to the objections so frequently urged by the opponents of Scripture against this portion of the sacred narrative. It is well known that the immolation of children was a common practice among ancient idolatrous nations, and the opponents of Scripture appeal to the command given to Abraham to offer up Isaac as a proof, "that human sacrifices are also recognized in the narrative as agreeable to the will of God." Now, the very first sentence of the narrative shows how utterly groundless the objection is: "And it was after these things that God tried Abraham." The command to offer up Isaac was intended to be merely a trial of Abraham's faith, and obedience to the will of God. The "chosen" (Gen. ch. xviii. 19) father of the faithful was to be set forth to his posterity as having victoriously stood the severest test of his faith. But when this test had been carried to the very uttermost, so that the knife was already in the hand to slay the victim, the trial was then completed, and God interfered, for He never intended that the command should be actually executed. The eminent Oriental scholar and theologian Le Clerk, has very pertinently remarked on this portion of the sacred narrative, that "it is introduced in order to show that, although human victims were not offered to God by his true worshippers, yet this did not arise from any unwillingness on their part to sacrifice the best and dearest."

14. *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD, He shall be seen.*

In commemoration of the event, Abraham called the name of the place יְהוָה יֵרֵךְ (*Jehovah jireh*)—*Jehovah will see*—i.e.,

* The verb רָאָה (*raah*) is sometimes used in the sense to look out or choose anything for oneself, hence to provide.

will provide. He evidently gave this name in allusion to the answer he made to Isaac's question. (v. 8.) There is likewise a very striking correspondence between this name and the name Moriah, *i. e.*, *Jehovah manifested.* "As it is said to this day," that is, it became a proverbial expression to say, "In the mountain of the LORD He shall be seen;" namely, that God would select this place where His presence would be manifested, and where sacrifices would be offered to him.

15. *And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time.*

16. *And said, By Myself I have sworn, saith the LORD, truly; because thou hast done this thing, and not withheld thy son, thy only one:*

17. *Indeed, I will bless thee greatly, and will multiply thy seed exceedingly, as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the shore of the sea; and thy seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

God swears either by Himself, (compare also Jer. xxii. 5,) or by His attributes and wonderful deeds; (comp. Deut. xxxii. 40, *et seq.*) for as the Apostle Paul says, "He could swear by none greater," (Heb. vi. 13.) This is another proof that the angel of the Lord is God Himself and not a created angel. "They shall possess the gate of their enemies," which simply means, they were to subdue their enemies, and take possession of their cities.

In verse 20 and remaining verses of the chapter we have the genealogy of Nahor, Abraham's brother, who was married to Milcah, the sister of Lot. The genealogy seems to be introduced to show the uninterrupted connection of Abraham's house with his family in Mesopotamia, from whence Isaac was to take his wife.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. *And Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah.*

2. *And Sarah died in Kirjath-Arba, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.*

Of the numerous women mentioned in the Scriptures, Sarah is the only one whose age is given. If this exception has any significance, it must be because she was the mother of the promised seed, and thus became the mother of all believers

(comp. 1 Pet. iii. 16); and hence the chronology of her life, like that of Abraham is given in all its more prominent cases. Sarah survived the birth of Isaac thirty-seven years. From our passage it appears, that Abraham, some time after the event recorded in the preceding chapter, removed from Beer-sheba, and had again taken up his abode in the grove of Mamre near Hebron, where Sarah died. This statement is highly important, as it shows that Sarah did not die in the land of the Philistines, but in the promised land. "And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah." The expression "came" would imply that Abraham was absent at the time of her death, and it is quite probable, as those who had large possession of cattle had several feeding places, he may at the time have been absent from Hebron, but as soon as he received the melancholy tidings, he hastened to perform the last duties, and to give vent to the expressions of grief for the loss of the affectionate wife, who for sixty-two years had shared his wanderings.

3. *And Abraham rose up from before his dead, and spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying,*

4. *I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me the possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.*

"And Abraham rose up." It seems to have been customary from early times to sit on the ground whilst mourning for the dead. So when the three friends of Job came to mourn with him, they sat on the ground with him seven days. (Job iii. 13.) And this custom, we believe, is still observed among some of the orthodox Hebrews in Europe.

"I am a stranger and sojourner with you." The land had indeed been repeatedly promised to him and his seed for an inheritance, but the Canaanites were still in possession of it, for God's appointed time for their expulsion had not yet come, and Abraham seeks now to obtain a place of burial for himself and his wife in the promised land. But here we may further remark that even the Israelites, after they had taken possession of the promised land, were only to consider themselves as strangers and sojourners, for we read (Lev. xxv. 23), "And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is Mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me." And David, after he had become King of Israel, says:

For I am a stranger with Thee,
A sojourner as all my fathers were.

(Ps. xxxix. 13, Eng. vers. v. 12. Compare also Heb. xi. 13.)

5. *And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,*

6. *Hear us, my lord : thou art a prince of God among us : in the choicest of our sepulchres bury thy dead ; none of us will withhold thee his sepulchre, that thou mayest bury thy dead.*

This ready, kind, and generous offer of the idolatrous children of Heth to a stranger, and one opposed to their idolatrous practices, may appear somewhat remarkable ; especially when the great degree of sacredness with which the resting places of departed relatives were regarded is taken into consideration. But it must be borne in mind that Abraham had before dwelled for a length of time at Hebron, and had found there faithful friends and allies in Eschol and Mamre. (See ch. xiv. 13.) It was from this place also that he had set out on his expedition against the kings who had taken Lot and his property, and returned victorious. This exploit alone must have made the Hebronites to look upon Abraham as a most extraordinary man, who was able to defeat with such an insignificant number of men, an army that had vanquished the combined forces of the five kings in the vale of Siddim. But besides this, as Abimelech had publicly acknowledged, the supernatural protection vouchsafed to Abraham, the report of the occurrence in Gerar had no doubt also spread to Hebron, and this would make the Hebronites to look upon Abraham with a feeling of awe. We can therefore understand how it came that the Hittites called Abraham נְסִי אֱלֹהִים (*nesi Elohim*) which admits of a twofold rendering, namely, "a prince of God," i. e., a prince appointed by God, or "a mighty prince."* With such an important personage they deemed it highly desirable to form a friendship, and to lay him under some obligation, and hence their ready reply ; nay, so far from being "a stranger and sojourner, thou art a prince of God among us, in the choicest of our sepulchres bury thy dead." But such a thought as burying Sarah in the sepulchre of an idolatrous family could only be regarded by Abraham with great abhorrence. He therefore asked as a favour that the children of Heth might entreat Ephron for him, who possessed a certain cave which the patriarch was anxious to obtain as a place of burial. As to Ephron nothing is farther known, but probably was some important person among them. Ephron not only at once

* It is one of the Hebrew modes of expressing the superlatives to place a noun in construction with one of the appellations of the Deity, which then attributes to the noun the idea of the highest excellency. Thus we have the expressions נִפְתָּלֵי אֱלֹהִים (*naphṭule Elohim*), lit. "the wrestlings of God," i. e., the most powerful wrestlings (Gen. xxx., 8) ; הַר אֱלֹהִים (*har Elohim*), lit. "the mountain of God," i. e., a most lofty mountain (Ps. lxxviii., 16) ; אֲרָזֵי אֱלֹהִים (*araze Elohim*), lit. "cedars of God," i. e., the finest cedars (Ps. lxxx., 10.)

acceded to Abraham's request to let him have the cave, but likewise the whole field which contained the cave, and that without asking any payment for it. Now this apparently liberal act on the part of the Hittite has been generally admired, and so it certainly deserved to be, if it had been made in all sincerity. But it is by no means an uncommon practice in the East to resort to this mode of dealing when asked to dispose of anything to a person of superior rank, with the expectation of having some favour granted in the future or receiving a present of greater value in return. Mr. Fraser, in his "Journey into Khorasan," has the following remarks, which strikingly illustrate Ephron's conduct: "The least a Persian says when he receives you is, that he is your slave; that his house, and all it contains—nay, the town and country—are all yours; to dispose of at your pleasure. Every thing you accidentally notice—his water smoking pipes, his horse, equipage, clothes—are all presents for your acceptance. This mode of address as Francklin observes, is not confined to the great; but the meanest artisan will not hesitate to offer the city of Shiraz, with all its appurtenances, as a present to a stranger on his arrival. All this is understood to mean no more than 'your obedient, humble servant' at the end of our letters. But it often happens, that if the stranger be a person of wealth or influence, the man is really anxious to force upon his acceptance any article he happens to admire, or expresses a wish to purchase. But if the stranger is inconsiderate enough to accept it, it will not be long before he discovers that by this act he is considered to have given the person a claim either upon his good offices and favours, or for a present of much more than equal value in return. If, like Abraham, he understands these matters, and is not disposed to receive such obligations, his best course is either 'not to admire' at all, or to insist on at once paying the value of that which attracts his admiration. In the latter case, the man will name the price, like Ephron, in a slight way, as a thing of no consequence. 'It is worth so much, what is that between me and thee?' But when the money is produced, he counts it very carefully, and transfers it to the pocket or bosom of his vest in a business-like manner, without any indication that shekels of silver are under valued by him." Abraham, however, courteously though determinedly declined to accept the burial place as a present, he desired to pay for it so that it might become his permanent property by a binding and legal purchase. "I will give thee money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there (v. 13). Ephron, in accepting the offer to take pay for the piece of land, still kept up the appearance that he merely did so to oblige, and not indeed that he cared for the money,

at the same time, however, he did not lose the opportunity of asking a considerable sum for it.

14. *And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him,*

15. *My lord, listen to me: a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.*

As the "shekel of silver" was in value equal to about 65 cents, the piece of land would amount to about 260 dollars. We of course do not know what size the field may have been, but there is no reason for believing it to have been of very large extent. The sum therefore asked for it was rather a considerable one, especially when it is taken into consideration that in those early ages the value of money must have been far greater than at present. Thus, in Exod. xxi. 22, the price for "a man-servant or a maid-servant" is placed at "thirty shekels," or about eighteen dollars. According to Judges xvii. 10, a household priest could be obtained at a yearly salary of "ten shekels, and a suit of apparel, and the victuals." David bought from Araunah a threshing-floor and oxen "for fifty shekels." (2 Sam. xxiv. 24.) Other examples might be cited to show the great value of money in those days, but those we have given are sufficient to show that the sum asked by Ephron was no small one, and that he made no sacrifice by the sale.

16. *And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named, in the presence of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.*

The oldest money employed was silver, which was apparently cut in small bars of certain weight, for convenience sake. The largest of these was called *shekel*, i. e., *weight*. There was no inscription upon it, except perhaps the number marked upon it whether it was one, two, or more shekels weight. But as this afforded a good opportunity to practise deception, for it was easy to make the bars of lighter weight, the money was therefore generally weighed. And thus Abraham weighed "the four hundred shekels of silver current money with the merchant in the presence of the sons of Heth." As in those early times there were no written contracts by which a property could be secured to the purchaser, it was important to give as much publicity as possible to such transactions in order that the report of them might with more certainty be handed down from generation to generation. And hence we find that, according to verse 18, Abraham not only concluded the bargain "before the eyes of the children of Heth," but also "before all

that went in at the gate of his (Ephron's) city." In most of the ancient versions, and by some commentators, **מַעֲרַת הַמַּכְפֶּלֶה** (*mearath Hammachpelah*) is rendered by "double cave." Thus the Sept. *το σπηλαιον το διπλουν*, "the twofold cave;" the Chald. **מַעֲרַת כַּפְלָתָא** (*mearath caphlatha*) "the cave of doubleness;" the Vulgate, "*spelunca duplex*;" Eben Ezra, "a cave in a cave." They regarded **מַכְפֶּלֶה** (*machpelah*) as an appellative, derived from **כַּפַּל** (*caphal*) *to be double*, supposing the cave to have consisted of two distinct parts. But the term "Machpelah" is now very generally regarded to be the *name* of the locality in which the field with the cave was situated, and this supposition is certainly favoured by the language in verse 19, "And the field of Ephron, which *is* in Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre." The "field" is here said to be "in Machpelah," which can only mean that it was situated in the locality called Machpelah. In verse 19, also, it is said that "Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah."

It seems to have been formerly a very common practice of depositing the dead in natural caves. Such caves are very numerous in Palestine and Syria. The mosque built over the tombs of the patriarchs is a massive structure, and is by the moslems esteemed as one of their holiest places, and Christians are strictly prohibited from entering it. The court in which the mosque stands, is surrounded by a high wall constructed of very large stones. This wall, Dr. Robinson thinks, may be substantially the same as that which is mentioned by Josephus, Eusebius, and Jerome, as the sepulchre of Abraham. Some few travellers have succeeded, by bribery or other means, in gaining an entrance into the mosque and cave, and they describe the sepulchre to be a deep and spacious cavern, cut out of solid rock, the entrance to it being in the centre of the mosque. Ali Bey, who passed himself off as a Mussulman, and thus gained an entrance, says: "All the sepulchres of the patriarchs are covered with rich carpets of green silk, and magnificently embroidered with gold; those of their wives are red, embroidered in like manner. The sultans of Constantinople furnish these carpets, which are renewed from time to time."

CHAPTER XXIV.

1. *And Abraham was old, and advanced* in years : and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.*

2. *And Abraham said to his eldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh ;*

3. *And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell :*

4. *But thou shalt go to my country, and to the land of my birth, and take a wife to my son, to Isaac.*

The sacred narrative furnishes us in this chapter—one of the largest in the Bible—with a precise and highly interesting account of the marriage of Isaac. The account appropriately commences with the statement that “Abraham was old and advanced in years,” for he had now attained the 140th year, having been a hundred when Isaac was born, and according to ch. xxv. 20, Isaac was “forty years old when he married.” In this advanced age, we can readily understand that the pious patriarch should be solicitous to see his beloved son, and heir of the promise, united to some child of God before his death. There were, however, great difficulties in the way of obtaining the desired object. Living, as he did, among the idolatrous Canaanites no such suitable person could be found among the women of the country ; and if he sent his son back to the country from whence he had been called, to choose himself a wife from among his kindred, there was the great danger that powerful temptations might induce him to remain there. Though Abraham, no doubt, had full confidence in the firmness of Isaac's principles, still he was too well acquainted with the infirmities of human nature. Under these circumstances, the prudent patriarch determined to send his most trustworthy servant to select a wife for his son from his kindred. But it will perhaps be asked, that as, according to ch. xxxi. 19, 30, idolatry had still a place in Nahor's family, was there not great danger of evil influences by a marriage with a member of that family ? This question may be satisfactorily answered in the words of an eminent writer: “The descendants of Terah belonged to the blessed branch of the Shemites; the germ of truth slumbered in them, and it required but a genial influence of example and instruction to bring it into blossom.” Thus,

* In the original the expression is **בא בימים** (*ba beyammim*) “advanced in days,” *e. e.*, advanced in age. In Job xiv. i. we have the contrary expression **קצר ימים** (*ketsar yamim*), *short of days*, *i. e.*, short lived.

for instance, though Laban had his household idols, yet he was ready to acknowledge that it was "Jehovah" Who guided the steward's steps (ch. xxiv. 50.)

The steward whom Abraham sent on the important mission was no doubt his old faithful servant Eliezer of Damascus, and although he had the highest confidence that he would carry out his wishes and obey his injunctions, yet knowing too well the weakness of human nature, and the insidious character of the idolatrous people among whom he dwelled, in order to make the steward more careful he binds him by the most solemn oath that could possibly be taken. "Put thy hand under my thigh;" we find this formality in administering an oath only once more employed, namely, ch. xlvii., 29, where Jacob requires the same ceremony from Joseph. It is therefore doubtful whether it was a common ceremony in administering an oath in those ancient times. The design of the ceremony is equally doubtful, and hence various explanations have been given. Eben Ezra and some other Jewish commentators consider that it symbolizes the submission of the servant, and demands unconditional obedience to the master. This view was also adopted by Rosemüller and many other modern commentators, and is no doubt the most plausible that has been advanced. The servant, after he had taken the oath to do as he had been charged, lost no time in setting out on his journey. He took ten camels, "and all the goods of his master"—it is, the precious things which his master sent for presents—"and went to *Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor." Although there is no mention made here of any one accompanying him, it is however evident from verse 32 that he was accompanied by attendants, which will account for the number of camels being taken. Indeed, it would have been quite against Oriental customs to have come on such an important errand from a wealthy chief unattended, and without some display of grandeur.

11. *And he made the camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water, at the time of the evening, at the time when the women come out to draw water.*

12. *And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray Thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness to my master Abraham.*

The steward had learned during his long service in his master's house, that the events in life are controlled by Providence, and now committed the success of his mission entirely

* Heb. אֲרֻם נַהֲרַיִם (*Arom naharayim*), i. e., *Syria of two rivers*; namely, the region lying between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris.

non, c'est la Mésopotamie; mais la ville de Nahor (Haran) était en Syrie - la Mésopotamie de Syrie, bien à l'ouest de la Jérusalem.

to the will of God. "He made his camels kneel down." This is the posture in which camels repose. "By a well," Probably the principal well belonging to the city, where the women of the town come at certain times of the day to draw water, which on account of the great heat during the day was generally done in the morning or evening. The duty of fetching water devolved upon the females, and is still performed by them among the Arabians and in some parts of India without distinction of rank; even the daughters of the greatest and proudest chiefs come with their vessels. In Turkey and Persia, however, this laborious work is now only performed by females among the poorer classes, the well-to-do families are supplied by men who make it a regular business. The wells were to the females what the gates were to the men. When they met at the time of drawing water, they indulged in a friendly conversation.

The prayer which the steward offered up is remarkable for its *humility*, he calls upon God as the God of his master, as if he felt himself unworthy to be acknowledged by the Almighty, and also for *the faith* in which it was offered. He had full confidence, that God would direct him in his important mission, to bring it to a successful issue. As a perfect stranger, he could not have known the maidens that belonged to Terah's family, he therefore fixed upon a sign, by the occurrence of which he might discover the person he was in search of.

14. *And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she will say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; let her be she whom Thou hast appointed for Thy servant, for Isaac; and thereby shall I know that Thou hast shown kindness to my master.*

15. *And it came to pass, before he had finished speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher on her shoulder.*

The devout prayer of the steward—which, according to verse 45, was mental, "before I had finished speaking in my heart"—was speedily answered. Rebekah with the pitcher upon her shoulder approached the well, and without taking any notice of the stranger, immediately went down to the well and filled her vessel.

Natural wells were made more accessible by having a few steps leading down to them, whilst excavated cisterns, for rain water, were generally covered with a large stone on account of the drifting sand: they were much wider at the bottom than at the opening. The steward who, no doubt, watched every movement of the maiden, now hastened to

address her, let me, I pray thee, taste a little water of thy pitcher." This request was not only quickly and politely answered by "drink *my lord," but with the additional offer, "I will draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have done drinking" (v. 19).

It will be seen Rebekah offered more than the steward had prayed for, (v. 14). She did not merely say "I will give thy camels drink also," but that she would draw water until they had done drinking. Now it must be remembered, that although camels can endure thirst for a very long time, when an opportunity does offer, they consume an immense quantity of water. We can therefore readily conceive that the task which Rebekah imposed upon herself to satisfy ten camels, must have been an arduous one. Yet she delighted in rendering this service.

20. *And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.*

After the stranger had finished drinking, "she hastened," implying that she cheerfully entered upon her task. "And emptied her pitcher into the trough." Many of the wells in the East, especially those near the towns, have watering troughs round the wells, which are either of stone or wood. She then "ran again to the well to draw *water*," and this she continued to do until the camels had finished drinking.

21. *And the man was wondering at her in silence, to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.*

The steward was struck with amazement at what had just transpired. The maiden who had rendered the service, was beautiful, active, kind-hearted, and, above all, had fully answered the sign he had fixed upon, by giving the required response to his request for a drink of water. So far then all had turned out favourably to his mission being successful. There yet remained, however, the important point to be decided whether the maiden belonged to Terah's family, and this made him wonder in silence to know whether the LORD after all "had made his journey prosperous or not." We can easily picture to ourselves the anxious feelings of the steward until he had satisfied himself about this circumstance. Before, however, he made inquiries of the maiden, he selected suitable presents.

22. *And it came to pass when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose-ring, a beka in weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels' weight of gold.*

*אֲדֹנִי (adoni) "my lord" was used by the Hebrews as we use "sir."

It appears from verse 47 that the jewels were not given, until he had received the satisfactory information as to her family. In the Authorized Version the Hebrew term *זָרָם* (*nesem*) is rendered "ear-ring"; now although the word denotes both an ear-ring and a nose-ring, yet one ear-ring would hardly have been a proper present. Besides, in verse 47, it is distinctly stated that the steward "put it in her nose;" Authorized Version, "put the ear-ring upon her face," but the Revised Version, "put the ring in her nose." "A beka" is half a shekel.

The nose-rings now worn by Oriental women are generally hollow, to render them less heavy. They are either of ivory, silver, or gold, and frequently set with costly jewels.

Bracelets are the most favourite ornaments among Eastern ladies, and not unfrequently among the rich, nearly the whole arm from the wrist to the elbow is covered with them. The bracelets are often very massive, and in our passage the two bracelets are said to have weighed "ten shekels," that is, about 2 oz. 6 pen., value about 46 dollars. Bracelets are promised in the Koran among the rewards for piety. (Koran xviii. 30.) It appears that in ancient times even men wore them. (Comp. 2 Sam., i. 10.) On the Assyrian sculptures they are often seen on the arm of a person of distinction, and even on the arms of the deities.

The steward having ascertained from the maiden that she was the daughter of Bethuel, and the grand-child of Abraham's brother (ch. xxii. 22, 23), gave the presents to her, not as a bridal gift—for those were according to verse 53 more numerous and costly—but for the service she had rendered him. The satisfactory answer he had received from the maiden regarding her family, dispelled the lingering doubt as to the success of his important mission. He now felt satisfied that the maiden was the wife appointed by God for his master's son, and he prostrated himself before the LORD, and devoutly gave thanks for His mercy in guiding him in the way to the house of his master's kinsman. Rebekah having extended the hospitality of her father's house to the stranger—"We have both straw and provender enough, and room to stay in" (v. 25)—hastened home to inform her family of all that had taken place. When Laban her brother saw the presents, and had heard what his sister had said, he also lost no time in asking the stranger to the house, "he ran out to the man, to the well," and found him standing by the camels, probably awaiting an invitation from the head of the house. Why Laban and not Bethuel went out, the narrative does not inform us, but probably he may have been infirm, at any rate the son being younger, could more speedily extend the invitation, and welcome him to the house.

31. *And he said, Come, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore dost thou stand without? and I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.*

"Thou blessed of the LORD." The reader will perceive from "LORD" being printed in capital letters, that in the original יהוה (*Jehovah*) is employed, and some of our modern writers maintain that its use by Laban, who, according to ch. xxxi. 30, is still an idolator, is altogether inconsistent. But there appears to me nothing at all remarkable in this, and can easily be accounted for. It will be seen, that as soon as the steward had received the favourable answer from Rebekah, he immediately bowed down and worshipped, making use of the words: "Blessed be the LORD (*Jehovah*), God of my master Abraham," which had no doubt been heard by the damsel before she had left the place, for there is no reason to suppose that she ran off before the man had done worshipping. In relating what had transpired, she would not omit to tell of the man thanking the LORD for his success, and what particularly would have struck her, that he had called his master's God "*Jehovah*." It is, therefore, quite natural that Laban in addressing the man should use the same name, if only out of courtesy, if nothing more. The costly presents, the servants (v. 32) that accompanied the steward, the number of camels, and probably also a handsome outfit, were to Laban a sign of distinguished position, and of wealth, and hence, addressed him: "Thou blessed of the LORD, wherefore dost thou stand without?" This was evidently intended as a gentle reproof, for not thinking better of his hospitality, and not accompanying his sister at once.

32. *And the man came into the house: and he (Laban) ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet who were with him.*

In the Authorized Version it is rendered: "And the man came into the house, and ungirded his camels," &c. This rendering gives the wrong impression, that the steward did all that is mentioned in our verse, which would have been a gross violation of the custom of the country, and a great lack of civility on the part of Laban to allow his guest to do it. The fact is, in the original the nominative is often omitted where it can be readily supplied from the context. Here the context clearly indicates that Laban is the subject of the verb, and ought to have been rendered "and he ungirded," as it is rendered in the Revised Version. Nor need we even suppose that Laban himself did it, but simply ordered it to be done; for, as we have already stated, according to Scripture usage, a person that orders a thing to be done is said to do it himself. The preliminary duties of entertaining guests having been

performed, "food was set before him;" but the faithful steward was too intent upon the affair entrusted to him to consider his own comforts, he refused to eat until he had made known to them the object of his journey. Although contrary to the existing rules of etiquette on such occasions, Laban perceiving the great anxiety of his guest to unburden his mind—"I will not eat until I have spoken my words" (v. 33)—yielded to his wishes, and requested him to speak. The steward now narrated in language both remarkable for its simplicity and elegance of diction, how God had blessed his master with worldly goods, and that Sarah his wife had borne to him a son in her old age, to whom he hath given all that he hath. How his master hath made him swear not to take a wife for his son from the Canaanites, but to go to his father's house and take a wife for him from his own family. The steward then narrated what had taken place at the well, laying particular stress upon how he had placed himself entirely under the Divine guidance. The steward was evidently anxious to impress upon Laban and his family "the mercy and truth" (v. 27) which God hath shown to his master; and in concluding his address he also entreats them that they might likewise extend "kindness and truth" to his master. But should they refuse to give Rebekah to Isaac for a wife, to tell him so at once, so that he may "turn to the right hand or to the left" (v. 40); it is, go to some other branch of Terah's family in order to fulfil his obligation to his master. We must not omit to notice that the phrase בֵּית אָחִי אֲדֹנִי (*bath achi adoni*) in verse 48, rendered in the Authorized and Revised Versions "my master's brother's daughter," should have been rendered "my master's kinsman's daughter," for Bethuel was Abraham's nephew and not his brother. We have already stated that the word אָח brother is used also in the sense of *kinsman*.

50. *And Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak to thee bad or good.*

51. *Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be the wife of thy master's son, as the LORD hath spoken.*

Bethuel and Laban acknowledged that "The thing proceedeth from the LORD." They recognized in the steward's journey the guidance of God, and that it would therefore be useless in any way to oppose His will. And accordingly at once consented to let Rebekah become Isaac's wife. Both the words and actions of Bethuel and Laban show that they could not have been hardened idolators, but easily accessible to the truth. We see throughout this transaction Laban taking a prominent part, for it seems brothers considered themselves

as the guardians of their sisters, to protect their honour, and to look after their welfare. (Comp. ch. xxxiv. 5, 11, 25; 2 Sam. xiii.; Judg. xxi. 22). The pious steward, as soon as he had received the favourable answer, and now saw his errand crowned with complete success, prostrated himself, and devoutly gave thanks to God for His mercy in having prospered his journey. A servant now brought the bridal presents, consisting of jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment for Rebekah, and valuable presents for the mother and brother. The faithful steward was now impatient to gladden the heart of his aged master, and the following morning asked for permission to set out on the journey homeward. This request, however, the relatives were unwilling to grant.

55. *And her brother and her mother said, Let the maiden abide with us some days, if only ten; after that she may go.*

The desire on the part of the relatives to keep Rebekah, if only for ten days longer after they had given their consent, was a very natural one. Indeed, it was the custom to allow a certain time to elapse between the betrothal and the marriage. But the steward could not bear the idea of keeping the good news from his venerable master a moment longer than was absolutely necessary, and persisted in his request to be allowed to depart. They decided therefore to leave it to Rebekah to say whether she was willing to depart immediately, and on being asked, answered, apparently without giving the matter a moment's consideration, "I will go." (v. 57.) The ready willingness to leave so suddenly her beloved parents and relatives, may, no doubt, be accounted for by Rebekah having, like her father and brother, recognized that "the thing proceedeth from the Lord," therefore did not wish in any way to oppose the steward's action, who had throughout his journey been under the Divine guidance. It was certainly not for want of filial affection. A maiden, who had shown such disinterested kindness to an utter stranger, could not be otherwise than an affectionate daughter. Rebekah's decisive answer, left her relatives no other alternative but to accede to her wishes. They accordingly permitted her to depart, not, however, without having first bestowed upon her the fervent blessing "be thou *the mother* of thousands of myriads, and let thy seed possess the gates of those who hate them." (v. 60.) The sorrow of leaving her affectionate parents and relatives, the loved home of her childhood, and pleasant associations, was in some degree lessened, by her nurse and her maids accompanying her to her new home; and also by the circumstance that, although Abraham and his son were strangers to her, yet they

were her relatives. When the caravan arrived in Canaan, and was nearing Abraham's tents, Rebekah on lifting up her eyes, saw a man walking in the field and coming towards them. She probably supposed it might be Isaac, and therefore asked the steward, "What man *is* this that walketh in the field to meet us?" And on receiving the reply that it was his master's son, she* quickly alighted from her camel, for as Isaac was walking, it would have been a gross breach of Oriental etiquette to be presented to him seated on the camel. Indeed, eastern travellers relate that in many parts the custom still prevails for women when riding and meeting a strange man, to alight from their animals as a mark of respect. So men also as a mark of respect to a superior, will alight and lead their animals until they have passed him. Rebekah also "took the veil and covered herself" (v. 65) as became a bride meeting the bridegroom. For according to the common custom on the day of marriage, the bride is brought veiled to the bridegroom. And this may explain how it was that Laban could practise such a deception on Jacob as substituting Leah for Rachel. (ch. xxix. 25.) The term צַיִף (*tsaif*) here employed denotes a *large veil*, covering nearly the whole body; differing from those ordinarily worn in the house, which cover only the face; the former renders it impossible to recognize the person. Our narrative represents Isaac as going out "to meditate in the field at even-tide; the word לַמְּדָח (*lasuach*), has by some been rendered as in our own version, *to meditate*, and by some *to pray*, either of these renderings are correct; only that the meditation here spoken of must be understood to have been *pious meditation*, and not of a worldly nature. It is somewhat strange that Gesenius in his "Thesaurus," p. 1322, without the authority of a single manuscript, should have proposed to read לָשׁוּט בַּשָּׂדֶה (*lashot bassadeh*), "to wander in the field." Isaac took Rebekah into his tent formerly occupied by his mother, "and she became his wife; and he loved her," and he was consoled for his mother's death, which had taken place three years before.

*וַתִּפֹּל (wattippal) v. 64; the verb נָפַל (*naphal*) primarily denotes *to fall*, but is also used in the sense *to alight quickly*. (Comp. 1 Sam. xxv. 23, 2 Kings v. 21.)

CHAPTER XXV.

1. *And Abraham took again a wife, and her name was Keturah.*

Keturah was, according to 1 Chron. i. 32, only Abraham's concubine, and many commentators, not indeed without some good grounds, suppose that she had entered into this relationship with the patriarch before the death of Sarah; and that she had borne the six sons mentioned in verse 2, during Sarah's life time. In support of this supposition, it is argued, that as the birth of Isaac was considered miraculous, it being beyond the natural order of events: (comp. ch. xvii. 17; xviii. 11.) Abraham being then one hundred years old, and as the apostle Paul expresses it, "as good as dead" (Heb. xi. 12), it is incredible that the patriarch should have become the father of six other children, after the death of Sarah, when he had attained to the age of 140 years. The account of the patriarch's marriage to Keturah being introduced here after the death of Sarah, does not necessarily argue against its not having taken place before, for we have already shown in our remarks on the second chapter, that events are not always recorded in their chronological order, the sacred writers not always finding it suitable to do so. This very probably was the case in this instance, as the insertion in an earlier place, would have interrupted the continuity of the narrative. It is for a similar reason that we find in verses 8, 9, the death and burial of Abraham recorded, though he lived fifteen years after the birth of his grandsons Jacob and Esau (vv. 25, 26), so that the history of the life of Isaac might not be interrupted.

2. *And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.*

Zimran was probably the ancestor of the Zamereni, a tribe in the interior of Arabia: (Pliny vi. 32). Jokshan was the ancestor of the Sabæans and the Dedanites. Medan and Midian each was the ancestor of a distinct tribe, but the two, tribes—probably from the proximity of their abodes—seem soon to have become merged into one, which will explain why the same people are sometimes called מִדְיָנִים (*Midianim*), *Midianites*, and sometimes מִדְיָנִים (*Medanim*), *Medanites* (compare Gen. xxxvii. 28, 36), though in the Authorized Version they are in both places called Midianites. Some of these two tribes had their abode in the peninsula of Sinai, and some in the east of the Jordan, near the territory of the Moabites. The Midianites were engaged in an extensive trade between Syria, Arabia, and Egypt. They are sometimes called Ishmaelites

(comp. ch. xxxvii. 25, 27, 28, 36), this arose from the Ishmaelites being the masters of the commerce of the desert, they gave the name to the Arabian merchants generally. The descendants of Ishmael have as yet not been identified. From Shuah descended the tribe to whom Bildad, one of the friends of Job, belonged. He is (Job ii. 11) called "the Shuhite." The district which the Shuhites inhabited may probably be identified with Sakkæa in the east of Batanæa.

5. *And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.*

6. *And to the sons of the concubines whom Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son while he yet lived, eastward to the land of the east.*

Abraham, in order to prevent any contention among his sons after his death in regard to the division of his property, took the wise precaution to make the settlement of it before he died. To Isaac the rightful heir, as the son of Sarah his real wife, he gave "all that he had", which here, according to the Hebrew idiom only means *the greatest share*, for he gave also gifts to the sons of his concubines Hagar and Keturah, and which no doubt were of such a substantial character as to enable them to begin life with. He also took the further precaution of sending them far away from Isaac, so that his prosperity might not arouse any jealous feelings, whilst those eastern regions to which he sent them, afforded them ample room and opportunities to form new communities.

7. *And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred and seventy-five years.*

9. *And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre.*

Abraham was a hundred years old when Isaac was born, and Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob and Esau were born (v. 26); accordingly Abraham lived after the birth of his two grandchildren fifteen years; but the death of the patriarch is here recorded before the birth of these two children, so that the account of the life of Isaac might not be interrupted. The narrative records the exceedingly pleasing circumstance of Ishmael taking part with Isaac in burying their father. It shows, however deeply he may have at the time felt the expulsion of his mother and himself from their home and the subsequent sufferings they had to endure, that he did not harbour any lasting ill feeling towards his father or his brother.

The history of Abraham being now concluded, the sacred writer merely states (v. 11) that God blessed Isaac after the

death of Abraham, and before proceeding with the sequel of his history, turns again to the history of Ishmael, giving a brief account of his descendants in order to show the actual fulfilment of the promise which God had made to Abraham concerning him in ch. xvii. 20, that twelve princes were to spring from him, and that he would become a great nation. In verses 13, 14, 15, we have the names of these twelve princes recorded, and from them descended twelve nations or tribes, which constituted the chief population of the Arabian peninsula.

By far the most powerful of those twelve nations, were the Nabathæans the descendants of Nebajoth, the first-born son of Ishmael. It seems that at first they chiefly applied themselves to the breeding of cattle. In Isa. lx. 7. "the rams of Nebajoth" are spoken of as being acceptable for sacrifice in the temple. They had their habitation in Arabia Petraea, Petra being their capital. Their wealth consisted in abundance of horses, camels, and sheep. To be subjected to a foreign power was regarded by them as worse than annihilation, and in order to guard against such a calamity, they built their capital in the rockiest part of the chain of Mount Seir, and made it almost impregnable. The Nabathæans, although occupied in raising cattle, were nevertheless a brave and warlike nation, and heroically defended their country from foreign foes. As an example of their great bravery, we may mention that in the year 312 B. C., Antigonus, king of Syria sent his general Athnæus with 4000 light armed troops and 600 cavalry against them. At the time when the general approached Petra, the greater portion of the Nabathæans were attending a fair held annually in the interior of the country for commercial purposes. The general attacked the city suddenly by night, killed a large number of its inhabitants and carried off considerable booty. The Nabathæans were soon informed of what had taken place, and without loss of time attacked the invading army and completely routed it. They were subdued, in the reign of the emperor Trajan, by Cornelius Palma, the Governor of Syria; but Petra still remained one of the chief centres of Arabian trade. Hadrian, who succeeded Trajan, bestowed great benefits upon the town and in grateful acknowledgment for these favours, they called its name *Adriane* on coins, some of which are still in existence. Under the protection of Roman garrisons, the commerce vastly increased, and with it the wealth of the city. It was during this period of great prosperity, that the city was adorned with the magnificent architectural works which render the town of such great interest to the traveller. In the ravine leading to the city, are the tombs with Ionic columns and other Greek ornaments. In another ravine, stands that wonderful structure El-Khuzneh probably used as a temple,

and regarded one of the wonders of the East, "the facade of which consists of two rows of six columns over one another, with statues between, with epitaphs and sculptured pediments, the upper one of which is divided by a little round temple crowned with an urn. This edifice shines still in all the freshness of colour, and attracts notice by the elaborate detail of sculptural ornament, but its interior is merely a lofty hall, with a chamber on each of its three sides. Behind this edifice there are many beautiful facades leading to apartments excavated in the cliffs, used either as tombs, or as temples, and later as churches. In the wider part of the valley is the splendid Greek theatre, entirely hewn out of the rock, 120 feet in diameter at the base, with more than thirty rows of seats, in the native rock, red and purple alternately, and holding upwards of 3,000 spectators. In the ancient city of Petra itself, every variety of ruins, of streets, houses, temples, and palaces, bespeaks the departed glory of a once magnificent and wealthy city." Petra is no doubt identical with the סֵלָע "Sela" of Scripture. The Hebrew name denotes *a rock*, and answers to the Greek word *Petra*.

From Kedar, the second son of Ishmael, descended the Kedarites, and who are no doubt identical with the Kedrei of Pliny (v. 12). They had their abode in the desert between Arabia Petræa and Babylon, and are characterized as a people inhabiting dark-coloured tents (Ps. cxx. 5; Cant. i. 5). They were famous for their fine cattle, and providing the market of Tyre with sheep and goats (Ezek. xxvii. 21); and spoken of as traversing the desert with their camels, and as possessing great wealth (Isa. xxi. 16). They were famous for their skill in archery (Isa. xxi. 17). Of the descendants of Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, and Massa, nothing certain is known. They very probably united with some of the larger tribes.

The descendants of Tema were an extensive trading people of the Arabian desert mentioned, Job vi. 19; Isa. xxi. 14; Jer. xv. 23. From Jetur descended the Ituræans, inhabiting the province in the east of Jordan. They were a formidable people, expert in using the bow, and audacious in attacking caravans for which they laid in wait. The tribes descended from Naphish and Kedemah, have not been identified.

16. *These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their villages, and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their nations.*

The Arabs, according to their mode of life, live either in villages or towns, or are dwellers in tents. By the term חֲצֵר (*chatser*), *village*, is meant a place without a wall, and by the

term *טִירָה*, (*tirah*), a circular encampment of tents. When the Bedonins encamp, they arrange their tents in a circle, within which the cattle are kept by night. The tents of the chief occupy a place in the centre of the circle. "Twelve princes," i. e., twelve chiefs. Each tribe has its chief or head of tribe. Although the death of Ishmael is already recorded in verse 17, yet this is done by anticipation—as was the death of Abraham—in order that the narrative of the life of Isaac might not be interrupted, for Ishmael lived 48 years after the birth of Jacob and Esau.

18. *And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur, which is before Egypt, as thou goest towards Assyria; *he dwelt in the presence of all his brethren.*

"From Havilah to Shur." The descendants of Ishmael occupied the vast territories from the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf to the borders of Egypt. Occupying the whole of the desert of Arabia with their nomadic excursions. "He dwelt in the presence of all his brethren"; that is to say, thus Ishmael, as represented by his descendants, dwelt in the presence of all his brethren, as was foretold to Hagar (ch. xvi. 12.)

19. *And this is the family history of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac.*

This verse forms the heading or title to the history of Isaac. We have already stated in our remarks on chap. ii. 4, that the primary meaning of the word *הוֹלֶדֶת* (*toledoth*), and in which it is generally used is, *generations*. It is, however, also used sometimes in the more restricted sense of *family history*, as Gen. vi. 9: "This is the (toledoth) family history of Noah;" and again, ch. xxxvii. 2: "This is (the toledoth) †the family history of Jacob," rendered in the Authorized Version, "these are the generations," a rendering which is not suitable to the context in these two passages. And so in our verse, it is more suitably rendered "family history," since it is not merely a

* In the Authorized Version the passage is erroneously rendered: "and he died in the presence of all his brethren"; the translators having taken the verb *נָפַל* (*naphal*) in the sense of *he died*, instead of *he dwelt*. The verb *נָפַל* (*naphal*) in our passage is evidently used in the same manner as the verb *שָׁכַן* (*shachan*), to dwell in the parallel passage ch. xvi. 12. It occurs again in the sense to encamp or to settle down in Judg. vii. 12. Both the Septuagint and Targum render "and he dwelt before his brethren." And so the Revised Version: "he abode in the presence of all his brethren."

† As a history is made up of various events, hence the word *הוֹלֶדֶת* (*toledoth*) is always used in the plural. It is derived from the verb *יָלַד* (*yalad*), to beget, since events are in Scripture spoken of as being begotten. See Prov. xxvii. 1; Ps. xc. 2.

record of Isaac's descendants, but also of the principal events which happened to him during his life. In order to give the narrative completeness, the sacred writer repeats certain facts which have already been stated. Thus he mentions again that "Abraham begat Isaac," so that the narrative might commence with his birth. He then repeats again that Isaac took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel and sister of Laban the Aramæan to wife, adding here, however, the very important information that he was then "forty years old," (v. 20) which enables us the more readily to understand several circumstances connected with Isaac's history. Isaac's faith, like his father's faith, was also put to the test. All Abraham's other sons had children, but he who was to grow into a mighty nation, whose seed was to be as the stars of heaven in multitude, is childless, though he had now been married to Rebekah twenty years. Yet Isaac remained unwavering in his faith that God would fulfil His promise. He did not repine at the delay, but "he entreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived." (v. 21.)

22. *And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, wherefore am I thus? (i. e. wherefore do I live?) And she went to inquire of the LORD.*

The verb יִתְרַצֵּטֵסוּ (*yithratsetsu*) employed here, denotes a violent struggle, which must have caused intense pain, and hence the exclamation, "wherefore do I live?" The circumstance being also an uncommon one, and probably, being impressed with the belief of its foreboding some future important event, if not some evil; "she went to inquire of the LORD", from Whom alone she could obtain the wished for information. As to *how* and *where* Rebekah made the inquiry commentators are by no means agreed. The language employed, however, we think furnishes itself the information how the inquiry was made. The phrase לִדְרוֹשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה (*lidrosh eth Jehovah*) "to inquire of the LORD", in most places where it occurs, implies an appeal to a prophet, or seer as he was originally called. Thus we read 1 Sam. ix. 9. "Beforetime in Israel when a man went to inquire of God, thus he said, come let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a prophet was before time called a seer." (See also 2 Kings iii. 11.; viii. 8.) Now Abraham had been called "a prophet" ch. xx. 7, and as he was still living, it is highly probable that she went to him, and through him inquired of the LORD. If, however, some may not deem this explanation quite satisfactory, there can be no objection for supposing, that Rebekah went to a place set apart

for Divine worship and in prayer made the inquiry herself. The incident of the children struggling together, was no doubt supernatural, and was intended to pre-intimate the future hostility that would spring up between the two nations that were to descend from them. The Edomites showed animosity towards the Hebrews already before the latter had even assumed a national character. When they were leaving Egypt and had reached the territory of the Edomites, they asked for permission to pass through their country, the request was made in the most friendly manner; "Thus saith thy brother Israel", promising to pay for anything they should require, and exercise the greatest care not to injure anything on their way, not even to drink water out of their wells without paying for it. Their polite and friendly request was not only arrogantly rejected, but the king of Edom sent a strong army against them, to oppose them (Num. xx. 14-21.) After that the two nations were almost continually at war.

25. *And the first came out red, all over like a hairy cloak, and they called his name Esau.*

From the child being covered with hair, he obtained the name עֶשָׂו (*Esav*), "Esau," *i. e.*, hairy. He was also called עֲדָם (*Edom*), "Edom," *i. e.*, the red. From him descended the Edomæans or Edomites. They remained independent till the time of David, who subdued them in fulfilment of the Divine declaration,

And the one people shall be stronger than the other people;
And the elder shall serve the younger. (v. 23.)

Of the death of Esau we possess no certain information.

26. *And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.*

The name יַעֲקֹב (*yaakov*), "Jacob" denotes both a *heel-catcher* and a *supplanter*. The name is derived from עָקַב (*akav*), to seize by the heel, and hence metaphorically, to supplant, to circumvent, just as in wrestling, an attempt is often made to hit the heel in order to trip an opponent. Both meanings of the name are referred to in Scripture; thus the prophet Hosea says: "In the womb he took his brother by the heel." (ch. xii. 4.) And Esau exclaims after he discovered that he had been supplanted in his father's blessing by Jacob, "Is not he rightly called Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times." (Gen. xxvii. 36.)

27, *And the boys grew; and Esau was an expert hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a righteous man dwelling in tents.*

As the two boys grew up, the difference in their characters became more and more strikingly apparent. Esau loved to roam over fields and mountains in search of game, affording him an opportunity to perform daring acts. Jacob, on the other hand, loved the quiet, peaceful occupation of tending the flocks, and "dwelling in tents." But our passage states further that Jacob was *יָשָׁר* (*ish tam*), *an upright man*, by which the sacred writer evidently desires to indicate that there was a marked difference in their religious character. The rendering in the Authorized Version: "And Jacob was a plain man," is not only ambiguous, but does not even convey the proper force of the original. The explanation adopted by Gesenius and others, that "the expression merely implies a milder and placid disposition, deprives the word *תָּם* (*tam*) of its signification in which it is generally used in Scripture. The same word is used in reference to Job, who is said to have been *תָּם וְיָשָׁר* (*tam weyasher*), *perfect and upright* (Job i. 1.) David prays, that God might protect him from those "who shoot in secret places at *תָּם* (*tam*) the perfect": (Ps. lxiv. 5, Eng. Vers. v. 4.)

28. *And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob.*

"He did eat of his venison," in the original it is: *כִּי צִיד בִּפִּי* (*ki tsayid bephiv*, *for his venison was in his mouth*; that is, it was agreeable to his taste. We must also observe that the Hebrew word *צִיד* (*tsayid*) denotes *any kind of game obtained by hunting*, and not merely *the meat of the deer*. The grounds for Isaac's ardent attachment to Esau are of a very trivial nature, and a writer has well remarked: "How mortifying a view of human nature to see prudence, justice, and piety controlled by one of the lowest and grossest of our appetites." The narrative does not assign any reason for Rebekah lavishing her affections upon Jacob, but no doubt the prediction made to her that "the elder should serve the younger" (v. 23), influenced her mind in favour of her younger son. Besides this his gentle disposition and domestic habits would naturally endear him to his mother.

29. *And Jacob cooked pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint.*

30. *And Esau said to Jacob, Let me devour, I pray thee, of that red, red pottage, for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. (i. e., the red.)*

Pottage made of various kinds of ground grain, is a dish much used among the people of the east. The red pottage

spoken of in our passage, was according to verse 34, made of "lentils," (*ervum lens*) which are of a brown red colour. Lentils were extensively grown in the east; those grown in Egypt were particularly famous, and the manner of cooking them has been immortalized on monuments. (See Wilkinson, *Anc. Egypt*, vol. ii. 387.) Esau makes use of the verb לָעַךְ (*laät*,) to devour, and not of the ordinary verb אָכַל (*achal*,) to eat; he also repeats "that red," but omits the substantive pottage, all of which indicates the passionate eagerness with which he longed to eat of the pottage.

31. *And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.*

The privileges which the "birthright" conferred in the patriarchial times, were the succession to the chieftainship, becoming the head and ruler of the family; the obtaining of a double portion of his father's property; and in this instance the inheritance of the covenant, which God had made with Abraham. All these privileges Esau bartered for a mess of pottage. And hence St. Paul called Esau a "profane person," for having resigned with indifference so unspeakable a privilege.

32. *And Esau said, Behold, I am going to die; and what profit is this birthright to me?*

This language of Esau clearly shows that his whole mind was entirely engrossed with the enjoyments of this life, and that he looked upon the spiritual blessings of the future as not worthy of consideration, regarding them of no particular value. Jacob, on the other hand, earnestly desired to obtain the right of primogeniture, which in this case embraced with the temporal privileges, also the title to the blessings of the promise. And for this he deserves our warmest commendation. But when we have said this much in his praise, it is all that the transaction admits of to say in his favour. The means which he employed to obtain the birthright cannot be too severely denounced: they were unjustifiable, uncharitable, and unfeeling. His action showed a want of faith in the Almighty to accomplish what He had promised. His mother had, no doubt, informed him of the Divine promise made to her before his birth, that "the elder should serve the younger," and he should have trusted in God to bring it to pass in His appointed time.

33. *And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him: and he sold his birthright to Jacob.*

Jacob was evidently conscious of the great injustice he had committed in obtaining such immense privileges for such a trifle

as a mess of pottage, and fearing lest his brother in sober moments may not consider himself bound to acknowledge the transaction, which involved such immense loss to himself and his descendants, made him swear, which made the bargain irrevocable. The Mohammedans kept this transaction for a long time alive, by distributing daily to strangers and to poor people pottage of lentils cooked in a kitchen near the grave at Hebron, where they believed the cession of the birthright took place. It is also a common remark among eastern people if a person sold a piece of land or any thing else at a low price, that "he sold it for *pottage*." Or if a father gives his daughter in marriage to an inferior person, that "he has given her for *pottage*."

CHAPTER XXVI.

1. *And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine which was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar.*

Isaac who had been dwelling "by the well of Lahai-roi" (ch. xxv. 11.) was now obliged to leave that place on account of a famine which occurred in the land, and went into the country of the Philistines, and took up his abode in Gerar. Now although the king spoken of in our verse bares the same name as the king who reigned in Gerar in Abraham's time, yet they were most likely different persons, as a period of about eighty years had elapsed since Abraham's sojourn in Gerar. We have already stated that Abimelech seems to have been the official name of the kings of the Philistines, just as the kings of Egypt assumed the name of Pharaoh when they ascended the throne. Indeed we find the name "Abimelech" of a king of the Philistines as late as David's time (see Ps. xxxiv. 1.) According to verse 26 the name of the general of the king's army was Phichol, which was also the name of the general of the king's army in Abraham's time, and it is therefore very highly probable that it was also an official title.

2. *And the Lord appeared to him, and said, Go not down into Egypt : dwell in the land which I shall tell thee :*

3. *Sojourn in this land, and I shall be with thee, and I shall bless thee, for to thee, and to thy seed, I shall give all these countries ; and I shall perform the oath which I swore to Abraham thy father.*

It appears that Isaac intended to proceed to Egypt in order to escape the famine, as his father had done on a previous

occasion when a famine took place in the land of Canaan. But on his way, the Lord, appeared to Isaac, and directed him not to leave the Promised Land; and he took up his abode in Gerar (v. 6). The time for the immigration of Abraham's seed into Egypt, as foretold, chapter xv., 13, had not yet arrived, and this may probably account for Isaac not being permitted to take refuge in that country as his father had done. God renewed to Isaac all the promises he had made to his father. By the expression "all these countries,"* is to be understood the territories of the Canaanitish tribes, particularly mentioned ch. xv., 18-21.

5. *Because Abraham obeyed My voice, and observed My observances, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.*

The sacred writer evidently employed the different terms in our verse—which embrace the various classes of ordinances—to indicate Abraham's great piety, and his perfect obedience to the will of God.

During Isaac's sojourn in Gerar the men of the city asked him concerning his wife, and either through real or imaginary fear that he would be killed if he acknowledged his true relationship to Rebekah, for she was beautiful, he also, like his father, had recourse to the miserable expedient by saying that she was his sister. Happily Isaac's misrepresentation did not bring any suffering upon any person, the true relationship being discovered before any evil resulted. It happened that the king, looking through a window of the palace, saw Isaac "sporting" with Rebekah in a manner to convince him that she was his wife. In the East the houses have flat roofs, and for the sake of safety are surrounded by a high railing (comp. Deut. xxii., 8). The people use the flat roofs for various purposes (comp. Josh. ii., 6; Judg. xvi., 27; 1 Sam. ix., 25, 26; Isa. xv., 3), but chiefly as a favourite resort to enjoy the cool of the evening. It is highly probable that it was from the roof of the palace, from which an extensive view was obtained on looking through an opening of the railing, he saw Isaac "sporting" with Rebekah. It was from the roof of the palace that David saw Bathsheba (2 Sam. xi., 2). Having made this discovery the king summoned Isaac to appear before him, and reproved him for having misrepresented his true relationship to Rebekah, pointing out to him the evil that might have easily resulted from his unwarrantable misstatement, and thus brought "guilt" upon him and his people. The high regard for the sanctity of matrimony evinced both by this king and the king in Abraham's time puts modern civilization to the

*הָאֵלֶּם a more ancient form for הָאֵלֶּה; and occurs only in the Pentateuch.

blush. They evidently looked upon wedlock as something more than a mere *civil contract*, which may be annulled on the most flimsy grounds, or violated without the least compunction. Judging from the conduct of those two kings towards the patriarchs, the kings of the Philistines in those days must indeed have been kind-hearted men, and deserving of the name אַבִּימֶלֶךְ *Abimelech*, i.e., *father king*. The king not only dismissed Isaac with merely a slight reproof, but made also an edict, that anyone harming him or his wife "shall surely be put to death."

12. *And Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold : and the LORD blessed him.*

It is a common practice among the eastern nomades when they come to a fertile place which promises to afford pasturage for some length of time, they apply themselves to agriculture, and after harvest, if necessary, remove to another place. In accordance with this custom, we find Isaac to sow in the land where he had now taken up his abode seeing that the land was fertile ; and God blessed his labours with a hundredfold produce. But God's blessing did not rest only on his agricultural pursuits ; but his flocks and herds also increased greatly, so that he became very great. Isaac's rapid increase in wealth produced jealousy among the Philistines. They apparently could not bear to see a mere stranger acquiring so much riches : they looked with envy on his agricultural prosperity. As they could not prevent the land from yielding an abundant harvest they had recourse to inflict an injury which would oblige him to leave the country ; they stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had dug when he sojourned in the land.

16. *And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us ; for thou art much mightier than we.*

From the kind treatment which Abimelech had extended to Isaac in making an edict to insure his and his wife's safety whilst sojourning in his territory (v. 11), it may be inferred that no personal ill-feelings prompted him now to request the patriarch to leave the country (comp. v. 29), but was induced to do so to prevent serious disturbances which his stay might give rise to, as the animosity of the people had manifested itself in mischievous acts. The reason which the king gives for requesting him to depart, "for thou art much mightier than we," was probably intended both as a compliment, and as an apology for his subject's jealousy. Isaac might justly have appealed to the solemn covenant which his father had concluded

with Abimelech, the reigning prince of that time (see ch. xxi 25-32), and insisted upon his right to remain, but being a peace-loving man, he at once yielded to the request of the king, and removed to "the valley of Gerar." Here he discovered that the animosity of the Philistines had also manifested itself against his father, for they had filled up the wells which he had dug. Isaac had these wells reopened, and to show his filial affection he called them by the same names as his father had done. Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a well of "springing water," in the original called מַיִם חַיִּים (*mayim chaiyim*) *living water*, i. e., water springing from a fountain.

The herdsmen of Gerar, however, claimed this water as their own, and as this gave rise to a quarrel between Isaac's herdsmen and the Philistines, he called the well עֶשֶׂק "*Esek*", i. e. *contention*. Isaac's servants now dug another well, but the Philistine herdsmen claimed this one also, and as this well was likewise a cause of contention Isaac gave it the appropriate name שִׁטְנָה "*Sitnah*", i. e. *strife*. The narrative affords no information upon what grounds the Philistines had based their right to the wells, but it could only have been upon the ground of their being in their territory. Though Isaac probably had a sufficient number of servants to have successfully maintained his right to the wells, yet being peacefully disposed, he rather yielded to their unjust claim than enter upon a violent contest with them, and removed to another place, most likely beyond the boundary of the country of the Philistines, which may account for his being left in undisputed possession of the third well which his servants dug. The Philistines probably did not think it prudent to carry their animosity beyond their territory. As there was no contention about this well, Isaac called it, רְחֹבוֹת "*Rehoboth*", i. e., *enlargement*, and he said, "For now the LORD has enlarged for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land" (v. 22.) The Hebrews were accustomed to speak of a change from straitened circumstances to a more prosperous condition, by being *enlarged*, or *brought into a spacious place*. Thus the Psalmist says, "Thou hast enlarged for me *when I was in distress*". (Ps. iv. 2.)

23. *And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.*

The narrative does not inform us how long Isaac had remained in the place where he had removed to after leaving the country of the Philistines, nor give the reasons for his removal from there. But from the long residence of his father in Beer-sheba, the place must have become particularly endeared to him, and he now pitched his tents in that place, no doubt near the tamarisk which his father had planted, and where he had invoked the

name of the LORD, the everlasting God (ch. xxi. 33.) Here the LORD appeared unto Isaac and renewed the promises which He had made to him on his going to Gerar (vv. 2-4.) and Isaac erected an altar and offered up his devout prayer and thanks to the Almighty for his gracious promises (vs. 23-25.)

26. *And Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his councillor, and Phichol the general of his army.*

It will be remembered that Abimelech, accompanied by Phichol, came on a former occasion to this very place to make a covenant with Abraham (ch. xxi., 22-33), and we now find him come for the same purpose to make a covenant with Isaac. This time he was in addition accompanied by his chief councillor, probably to invest the transaction with a political importance. Abimelech had no doubt heard of the continually increasing prosperity of Isaac, and recognized in it a supernatural influence. He saw that a great future awaited him and his posterity, and he was therefore anxious to renew the treaty of friendship which he had concluded with his father. He was probably especially induced to do this now on account of the ill-treatment Isaac had received at the hands of his people, and he having himself requested him to leave the country.

27. *And Isaac said to them, Wherefore come ye to me, and you hate me, and have sent me away from you?*

28. *And they said, We saw indeed that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there now be an oath between us, even between us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;*

29. *That thou wilt do us no evil, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace; thou art now the blessed of the LORD.*

After the ill-treatment Isaac had experienced at the hands of the Philistines, and having been by Abimelech himself requested to leave his land, we can readily understand that the patriarch would be astonished to receive a visit from the king accompanied by his two chief officers. He therefore naturally inquired of them what the object of their visit may be, as their past conduct indicated a hatred towards him. The king's reply is perfectly candid; there is not the least attempt to disguise the nature of his coming. He candidly acknowledged that he saw that the blessing of the Lord rested upon the patriarch, and that he therefore was anxious to make a solemn covenant with him that he might be assured that he and his people need not fear any evil from him or his descendants. He reminds the patriarch of his former friendly behaviour towards him;

"we have not touched thee," that is, we have not driven thee away by force; "we have done thee nothing but good," no doubt referring to his endeavour to protect Isaac and his wife from harm (comp. v. 11); "and have sent thee away in peace," by which he evidently wished to impress upon Isaac that the request to depart from the land was well meant, as the then existing jealousy among his people might have led to mischievous deeds which were beyond his power to prevent; "thou art now the blessed of the LORD," as if he had said, since God has so greatly blessed thee, and thou art under His protection, thou canst afford to be magnanimous, and deal generously with us. The patriarch accepted the king's apology; his open-hearted declarations convinced him that his professions were sincere, and he made them a feast, and they ate and drank together as a token of friendship. In the morning, before the visitors departed, the covenant of peace and friendship was finally sealed by an exchange of oaths. By the renewal of the covenant the Philistines were exempted from the fate impending on the Canaanites, and had their independence guaranteed to them. The same day that the visitors left to return home Isaac's servants, who had been digging a new well, brought him the good news that they had found water, and the pious patriarch's mind being still absorbed by the solemn act performed in the morning, called the well שִׁבְעָה "*Shibah*," i. e., *oath*, in commemoration of the conclusion of the covenant by the exchange of oaths. "Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba to this day (v. 33); the reader will observe that the passage does not state that Isaac called the place Beer-sheba, but that "the name of the city is Beer-sheba;" it had already received that name from Abraham in commemoration of a similar event (comp. ch. xxxi., 31). Our passage merely intimates that the name Beer-sheba receives now additional significance and propriety by the renewal of the covenant which Abraham had concluded in the same place with Abimelech, king of the Philistines. The well which Isaac's servants dug, however, is a different one from the one dug by Abraham's servants, and some modern travellers mention the existence of two wells in the neighbourhood of Beer-sheba, both still bearing this name.

34. *And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri, the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.*

35. *And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah.*

A period of no less than eighteen years had elapsed since the event recorded in the preceding verses. As the sacred narrative

does not record anything that took place in the patriarch's family during that time, we may safely take it for granted that, the years were passed in peace and happiness such as can only be experienced in a God-fearing family. But now the reign of domestic peace was again disturbed, this time not by strangers, but by an act of the favourite son of the father, who took to himself two wives from the idolatrous and depraved Hittites, who were *מרת נפש* (*morath nephesh*) "a grief of mind", or more literally "a bitterness of spirit" to Isaac and Rebekah. The Septuagint renders, "they were contentious with Isaac and Rebekah"; and the Chaldee Version paraphrases, "they were rebellious and stubborn against the command of Isaac and Rebekah." But although the difference of manners and impiety of these strange women may have been a constant source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah, the primary cause of "the bitterness of spirit" no doubt was their descent from a tribe which on account of its impiety was devoted to destruction, and from which the Hebrews were for ever to be separated. This alliance with an idolatrous people shows that Esau neither possessed any fear of God, nor filial affection, seeking merely the enjoyment of this world, and having no thought for the future.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. *And it came to pass, when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said to him, My son: and he said to him, Behold, here am I.*

2. *And he said, Behold, I pray thee, I am old, I know not the day of my death:*

3. *Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and hunt for me some venison.*

4. *And make for me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.*

Isaac had now attained to the age of 137 years, the age at which Ishmael had died, fourteen years before. The remembrance of his half-brother's death at this age, together with his increasing infirmities, may have impressed him with the idea, that his own days upon earth were also drawing to an end—although he lived forty-three years after this—and hence we find him now desirous to bestow his paternal blessing upon his firstborn son. Notwithstanding the distinct declaration

which God made to Rebekah, that "the elder shall serve the younger," and notwithstanding that Esau had frivolously bartered away his birthright with the privileges appertaining to it for a mess of pottage, and now had shown his utter disregard for the religious feelings of his parents by taking to himself two wives from the accursed Canaanites, notwithstanding all this, Isaac still persevered in his preference of Esau. It must, however, not be supposed that Isaac desired to bless Esau because he "ate of his venison" (ch. xxv. 28), but because he being his first born, and therefore, regarded him as the successor to the headship of the family. Why Isaac requested Esau to procure for him some venison, and prepare for him his favorite dish before he bestowed the blessing, is not quite clear. It may, however, have been either in order to exhilarate his physical powers before imparting the blessing; or in accordance with a generally prevailing custom among the ancient Eastern people of eating and drinking on certain religious observances.

Rebekah who had heard what Isaac said to Esau, determined to secure the blessing for her favourite son Jacob, and as she saw no way of doing so by fair means, she had recourse to a stratagem which the dim eye-sight of her husband greatly aided to render successful. She, no doubt, considered the deception which she was about to practise upon her aged husband to be under the circumstances justifiable. She probably reasoned: "What does Esau, who sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage, and so spurned the great privileges as heir, care for a blessing? And has not the LORD declared that 'the elder shall serve the younger,' and how is this declaration to be fulfilled if Esau obtains the blessing? Surely I am justified in using any means to bring it to pass." Now whilst we are ready to make all possible allowance for the feelings of a doting mother that actuated her to secure for her beloved son the highly prized father's blessing, it is nevertheless impossible to do otherwise than regard her conduct on this occasion as most highly reprehensible. Examine it as we will, we can discover nothing but a deliberate and determined deception. On a former occasion when in bodily pain, she inquired of the LORD, why did she not do so in the present perplexity? Or where was her faith, that God would surely accomplish that which he had promised? Why did she not reason, "The LORD hath spoken, and will He not accomplish it?" Her proper course would have been to have represented to her husband, that as God had declared that "the elder shall serve the younger," the birthright was transferable, and that Esau had actually sold it to Jacob, and, therefore, the blessing belonged to the latter. She should have entreated him to comply with

what evidently was ordained by God. And we doubt not, but that the pious patriarch would have perceived the propriety of his wife's representation, and would have acted accordingly. But should he still have persisted in bestowing the blessing upon Esau, she should have borne in mind that the Almighty is able to overrule the designs of man. We have an instance of God so overruling the action of Jacob in the bestowal of his blessing upon the two sons of Joseph (ch. xlviii. 13, 14).

8. *And now, my son, listen to my voice, according to that which I command thee.*

9. *Go, I pray thee, to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth.*

Rebekah, in addressing her son, employed such language as would ensure his ready compliance with her wish. She bids him to do as she *commanded* him, appealing at once to his filial obedience. It will, perhaps, be asked how the flesh of "kids of goats" could be imposed upon Isaac as "venison?" but we have already stated that the Hebrew term צִיד (*tsayid*) denotes any kind of game obtained by hunting, and therefore does not necessarily mean *flesh of the deer*, but may also mean the flesh of the *gazell*, which in the young animal does not differ much from the flesh of the kid of the goat. Any slight difference in taste would be readily removed by the use of spices.

11. *And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man.*

12. *Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall be in his eyes as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.*

It appears from the language in our passage, and from Jacob's subsequent conduct, that the fear of detection, and thus bringing a curse instead of a blessing upon himself, alone deterred him from at once acceding to his mother's unrighteous proposition. When his mother had set his mind at rest as to the consequences in the case of failure, by promising to bear the blame herself, "upon me be thy curse my son," (v. 13), he no longer hesitated to comply with her wishes. Now, we can readily understand that Jacob highly prized the blessing of his father, and as he, no doubt, looked upon the purchase of the birthright as a perfectly valid transaction, probably did not entertain any conscientious scruples in depriving his brother of the blessing, considering very likely the blessing to be one of the privileges belonging to the birthright. The consideration of obedience due to a parent may also have had weight with him in acced-

ing to his mother's proposition. But whilst we say this much in extenuation of Jacob's perpetrating the deliberate deceit upon his aged father, we are far from agreeing with some Jewish and Christian writers who have attempted to vindicate Jacob's conduct on this occasion on the ground of necessity; but all the arguments that have been adduced to justify the act of deceit and utterance of deliberate falsehoods necessarily crumble to pieces at the least touch. Under no consideration is it allowable to do a wrong act in order that good may result from it. We may reasonably assume that Rebekah's knowledge of all religious obligations were not of such a high standard as to form a proper judgment on all moral points; but with Jacob, who from his youth enjoyed the opportunity of religious training, the case is different. He could not have been ignorant that deceit and falsehood are grievous sins in the sight of God, and should, therefore, at once have represented to his mother that in acceding to her proposition he would sin against God. The duty of obedience to parents is most forcibly inculcated in the sacred pages. Solomon says:

The eye that mocketh at his father,
And despiseth the obedience of a mother,
(i. e. the obedience due to a mother,)
The ravens of the valley shall pick it out,
And the vultures shall devour it.—(PROV, xxx. 17.)

But obedience to the precepts of God is the primary duty, and it becomes absolutely imperative upon children to disobey their parents should they require them to do anything which is sinful in the sight of the Almighty.

And here we must not omit to observe, that it is one of the remarkable peculiarities of the sacred records, to portray with the same strict fidelity the faults and infirmities of Scripture personages as their virtues and graces. They are represented as weak and as prone to err as we ourselves. It must, therefore, not be inferred that because Moses does not offer one word in condemnation of Jacob's and Rebekah's conduct, that he meant to justify it. He merely states the facts as they occurred, without interrupting his narrative by affixing any comment on them. But although the sacred historian does not descant on the character of the transaction, we still plainly see, from the subsequent narrative, that the offence was not left unpunished. Jacob on account of the hatred which his brother had conceived against him, and the resolution he had formed to slay him after Isaac's death, was obliged to flee from his home and take refuge with his mother's kindred in a distant land. The deception which Laban practised upon him, was a merited retribution for the deceit which he had practised upon his father. The punishment of Rebekah was also not insignificant.

As the heir to the blessings vouchsafed to Abraham, there could be no necessity for Jacob leaving his paternal home, even as Isaac had never left his father's tents. She therefore, no doubt, hoped of keeping him always by her side. But now as the result of the deception she practised upon her husband, she sees her favourite son a fugitive from home, a lonely wanderer into a distant land. The separation from her favourite son must have greatly embittered her life. The idea that he had set out with the intention of taking up his abode with her brother Laban would in some measure temper her grief. But still it must be remembered, that long dreary wastes of country stretched between Beer-sheba and Padan-aram, through which few, if any, travellers passed. The convenience of post did not exist in those days, there was, therefore, but little chance of obtaining tidings from him, as to his welfare. And though she hoped at the time of her son's departure, that the separation would only be for a short time, it turned out otherwise, for no less than a period of twenty years elapsed between his flight and return to Hebron. And, indeed, as there is no mention made of Rebekah on Jacob's return, we must infer that she had departed this life before that time and that she never had the happiness of folding her beloved son in her arms again. With the departure of Jacob from home, the history of Rebekah is ended. Her name is only once more mentioned, ch. xlix. 31, as being buried in the cave of Machpelah. Even as to the time of her death no mention is made in the narrative.

15. *And Rebekah took the choicest garments of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and clothed Jacob her younger son with them :*

16. *And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon his smooth neck.*

Rebekah having conceived the scheme of deception, and determined to carry it out, took all precaution possible against its failure. The great obstacle in the way to bring the undertaking to a successful issue was, that Jacob was a smooth man and his brother a hairy man. But the shrewd mother soon found means to overcome the obstacle in the manner related in our verses. The skins of the kids of the goats, were not those of the European goats, which would have been quite unsuitable for the occasion, but were those of the *Angora goats*,* or camel goats, as they are sometimes called, and of which there

*They are so called from the city Angora (the Ancyra of the ancients), in the mountainous interior of Asia Minor, about 220 miles distant from Constantinople. The peculiar hair of the Angora goats, seems to depend on the climate, for it soon changes when the animal is transferred to Europe.

are still large herds to be found near mount Lebanon. These goats have beautiful long black silky hair, (see Paulus's *Oriental Travels*, vii. 108,) and hence we find the locks of the Shulamite, compared to the hair of these goats—(see *Song of Solomon*, iv. 1.) It appears also that wigs were made of this hair, (see *Martial Epigr.* 12, 45.)

18. *And he came to his father, and said, My father : and he said, here am I. Who art thou, my son?*

The question, "Who art thou, my son?" clearly indicates that a suspicion that all was not right had been aroused in the mind of Isaac. It may have been caused either by Jacob's voice not quite resembling his brothers, or by the short time it had taken in obtaining the venison, or probably by both. Jacob answered boldly, "I am Esau thy first-born," (v. 19); a deliberate falsehood; but he had undertaken to practise a deception upon his father, and in order to avoid at once detection he had no alternative left than to reply as he did. The perpetration of a wrong action, always necessitates the utterance of falsehood to prevent detection, or to avoid punishment. Some writers have indeed laboured to divest Jacob's answer of falsehood by interpreting it, "I am Esau thy first-born, not in person, but in right;" but I am sure, the reader, whilst he may admire such an explanation as highly ingenious, will hardly consider it as satisfactory. But even supposing the language of this part of the answer would bear such a construction, how will those commentators get over the other part: "I have done according as thou badest me," seeing that he had received no such command? Jacob's conduct admits of no apology, and all that can be said in regard to it is, that it was the act of a man who, notwithstanding his piety, was yet weak and prone to err as any other human creature. Jacob's bold assertion that he was Esau, seems, however, not to have altogether satisfied the aged patriarch. The short time occupied in procuring the venison apparently was unaccountable to him. Hence he asked, "How is it thou hast found it so quickly my son?" The question demanded an answer, and this, in order to avoid detection, could only be given by uttering another falsehood, and Jacob answered, "because the LORD thy God brought it" (v. 20). The previous prevarication was bad enough, but this one, staggers one for its enormity; and we cannot but help thinking that Jacob himself must have felt horrified at his blasphemous reply, making God Himself confederate in his sin, "the LORD thy God brought it to me," and now hated himself for having entered upon the miserable imposture. Most likely, when he conceded to his mother's

request, he never thought of its involving anything more than a little artful deceit, and we should therefore take warning from Jacob's error, and flee from evil at its approach as one would flee from a poisonous serpent to avoid the deadly bite. One should have thought, that Jacob's solemn declaration would have satisfied his father, but it was not so. There was evidently something in Jacob's voice, which still left a lingering doubt in the patriarch's mind; to assure himself, therefore, that it was really Esau who stood before him, he asked him to "come near" that he might feel him, whether he was indeed his son Esau or not (v. 21). Had it not been for Rebekah's precaution, the deceit would now have been detected, for even as it was, the hairy feeling did not altogether satisfy Isaac, for he said, "The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* Esau's hands" (v. 22). Accordingly we find he asked once more, "Art thou my very son Esau?" to which Jacob replied, "I am" (v. 24). Whether this reply had the effect of quieting the lingering doubts in Isaac's mind, it is impossible to say. It appears, however, that he offered no further objections, but partook now of the venison of his son, and when he had finished eating, requested him to come near and kiss him.

27. *And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelt the odour of his garments, and blessed him, and said,*

See, the odour of my son

Is like the odour of a field which the LORD hath blessed.

28. *And God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth,*

And abundance of corn and wine.

29. *Peoples shall serve thee, and nations bow down to thee:*

Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee:

Cursed be those who curse thee, and blessed be those who bless thee.

When Jacob came near the aged patriarch he smelled the odour with which Esau's garments were impregnated. It has by some been supposed, as the Orientals are very fond of perfumes, and sprinkle their clothes either with scented oil or water, or fumigate them with the incense from some odoriferous weed that the odour in Esau's clothes had been imparted in some such way; but such is not the case. It is well known that many parts of Palestine and Arabia exhale a most delicious odour (comp. Hom. iii. 113, Plin. xvii. 5). This is especially the case after rain, when the fragrance becomes very strong and extremely sweet. We can, therefore, readily understand that the clothes of Esau, whose favourite occupation was to roam through hill and dale in

search of game, would become impregnated with the scent with which the air is perfumed. And this will probably furnish us with the reason why Rebekah induced Jacob to put on his brother's clothes, as the scent from them would lend additional aid to render the deceit successful. We certainly cannot conceive any other reason. As Isaac was not able to distinguish whether the person before him was Jacob or Esau, it is not at all likely that he could discern what clothing he wore. It was the scent of the garments that was to play its part in the scheme, and not the garments themselves. We may remark, also, that the Hebrew word *החמדות* (*hachamudoth*) (v. 15), which is generally rendered "goodly raiment" or "choicest garments," primarily denotes *desirable*, hence *desirable garments*, so that the passage literally rendered reads, "And Rebekah took the garments of Esau her eldest son, the desirable ones, which were with her in the house;" "the desirable ones," *i. e.*, those suitable for the occasion.

We have already observed, in our remarks on Hebrew poetry in vol. i., that the inherent love of the ancient Hebrews for poetry is strikingly apparent, even from the limited amount of literature that has escaped the ravages of time. Their language, as soon as it passes the limits of mere narration, at once becomes dignified; their blessings, their prayers, their dire lamentations, and triumphant bursts of joy, all display strikingly their natural taste for poetry; and hence it is that so much of the Hebrew Scriptures are written in poetry, and that even among the prose writings we so frequently meet with poetic effusions. Such a poetic declamation we have in Isaac's blessing. It is couched in highly poetic language, and possesses all the characteristics of Hebrew poetry.

The blessing is prophetic, and descriptive of the land which the descendants of Jacob were to possess, and accords in every respect with the immense natural fertility of Palestine. It was indeed a land which the Almighty had blessed, "a good land, flowing with milk and honey," (Exod. iii. 8.) And as Moses more distinctly describes it, "a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive oil, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness; thou shalt not lack any thing in it." (Deut. viii. 8, 9.) Skeptics have indeed laboured to invalidate the statements of the sacred writers who represent it as one of the most delightful spots upon the face of the earth, by drawing arguments from the present neglected state of some parts of the Holy Land, and from its present desert appearance. But its original fertility and beauty are by no means even now wholly obliterated, and the arguments of the opponents of Scripture have been proved to be utterly futile by the unanimous testimony of modern travel-

lers who seem to vie with one another in contributing information in illustration and confirmation of the sacred records. "The fame of fertility of Palestine, and its former riches in corn, wine and dates," observes Rosemuller, "is even immortalized by ancient coins, which are still in existence. But since the land has been several times devastated, greatly depopulated, and come under the Turkish dominion, and the Arab tribes, who rove about it, and not only make it insecure for natives and strangers, but also have continual feuds among themselves, agriculture has decreased, and the country has acquired the present desert appearance, particularly near the roads. Still traces of its former fertility and beauty are every where to be seen." The celebrated traveller D'Arvieux, remarks, "It must be confessed, that if we could live secure in this country, it would be the most agreeable residence in the world, partly on account of its pleasing diversity of mountains and valleys, and partly on account of the salubrious air which we breathe there, and which is at all times filled with balsamic odours from the wild flowers from these valleys and from the aromatic herbs on the hills." (Travels, vol. ii. p. 204.) Lord Lindsay remarks: "Let me not be misunderstood, richly as the valleys wave with corn, and beautiful as is the general aspect of modern Palestine, vestiges of a far more extensive ancient cultivation are everywhere visible—vast and unreclaimed districts constantly intervene between the oasis of fertility—while, except, immediately round the villages, the hills once terraced and crowned with olive trees and vines, are uniformly bare and overgrown with wild shrubs and flowers, proofs far more than sufficient that the land still enjoys her Sabbaths, and only awaits the return of her banished children, and the application of industry commensurate with her agricultural capabilities, to burst once more into universal luxuriance, and be all she ever was in the days of Solomon. (Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land, p. 251). Dr. E. D. Clarke, speaking of the appearance of the country between Sechem and Jerusalem, says, a sight of this territory alone can convey any adequate idea of its surprising produce; it is truly the Eden of the East, rejoicing in the abundance of its wealth. Under a wise government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest; the salubrity of its air; its limpid springs; its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains; its hills and vales; all these, added to the serenity of the climate, prove this land to be indeed a 'field which the LORD hath blessed; God hath given it of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.'" (Travels, vol. ii. p. 521.) Josephus also bears testimony to the great fertility of Palestine. (De

Bell. Jud. lib. iii. c. 3 par. 2.) Tacitus describes the climate as dry and sultry; the natives as strong and patient of labour; the soil as fruitful, exuberant in its produce, like that of Italy, and yielding the balm and palm tree. (Tacit. Historia. lib. v. c. 6.) Justin confirms the account of Tacitus, respecting the exuberant produce of Palestine, its beautiful climate, its palm and fragrant balsam trees. (Justin. Hist. Philopp. lib. xxxvi. c. 3.) The celebrated Arabian geographer, Abulfeda, who had visited Palestine, says, "that even in the thirteenth century, it was the most fruitful part of Syria." (Tabulæ Syriæ p. 9 edit. Koler.) Rabbi Joseph Schwarz, who resided sixteen years in Jerusalem, says: "The grape vine flourishes most luxuriantly in this country, and it is not rare that you meet with vines which are extended so far that thirty men can conveniently sit under the overshadowing of one, as under a tent." (Desc. Geog. of Palest. p. 303.) Volumes might indeed be filled with extracts from the works of eminent travellers in confirmation of the Scripture accounts of the beauty and fertility of the Holy Land; but the few we have given, will, we are sure, be quite sufficient to convince the unprejudiced reader, that the arguments which the opponents of Scripture bring forward to invalidate the Scriptural statements must be altogether groundless.

In a country like Palestine where throughout the months of May, June, July, and August, not a single drop of rain falls—although the sky is sometimes obscured with clouds—we can easily imagine how very beneficial a copious dew must be to vegetation during these dry months, we can, therefore, readily understand why *the dew* is so frequently made a symbol of the Divine goodness in Scripture, and the granting of it forms such an important part in the bestowal of blessings. (Compare Gen. xlix. 25, where "the blessings of heaven from above," are equivalent with *rain* and *dew*; Deut. xxxii. 2; xxxiii. 13, 28; Mic. v. 7; Zech. viii. 12.) The dew is so heavy as to wet to the skin those who are exposed to it, and soon as the sun rises; and the atmosphere becomes clear, the mists are quickly dispersed, and the moisture which the dew has communicated to the sand, is entirely evaporated. (Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 325.) Thus the prophet Hosea, forcibly compares the transitory good impressions of "Ephraim" and "Judah" to "a morning cloud," and to "the early dew," that "goeth away," (ch. vi. 4.) Allusions to the refreshing dews of Palestine occur very often in the Scriptures, the reader may, for instance, compare Ps. cxxxiii. 3, and Hosea xii. 4. But although the dew is very copious, yet as the heat during the months of June, July, and August, steadily rises to a tropical temperature, it only continues to nourish the more robust and

hardy shrubs; the grass and plants gradually become dried up, so that fields, so lately clothed with the richest verdure, and adorned with the loveliest flowers, are converted into a brown and arid wilderness. If, at this season, a single spark falls upon the grass, a conflagration immediately ensues especially if any low shrubs, or briars, or thistles are contiguous. (Compare Exod. xxii. 6.; Joel i. 19, 20.; Is. ix. 18. &c.) Isaac's blessing conveyed to Jacob, also the promise of dominion over the conquered nations.

"Peoples shall serve thee, and nations bow down to thee." This must, of course, be understood of his descendants, and not personally of Jacob. And the prophetic declaration was signally fulfilled in the days of David, when the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, Syrians, and Edomites were subdued by the Israelites. But not only foreign nations should acknowledge the sovereignty of Jacob's descendants, but also his "mother's sons,"—that is, the descendants of Esau, and particularly the Edomites, the nearest kinsmen of the Hebrews.

Jacob had scarcely left his father's presence when Esau came with the venison which he had prepared, and said: "Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me" (v. 31). We can readily understand that the pious patriarch should have "trembled very exceedingly," or as the original more forcibly expresses it, "trembled with a great trembling exceedingly," when he heard the words of Esau. The idea that after all his precautions he had yet been imposed upon would naturally overwhelm him with astonishment and grief. Indeed, from the question, "Who art thou?" it would appear that he hardly could bring himself to believe that such a wicked imposition could have been practised upon him. And even after Esau's ready reply, "I am thy son, thy firstborn, Esau," Isaac was unwilling to think that his younger son was the perpetrator of the deceit, and asked: "Who, then, is he who took venison, and brought it me?" But when his astonishment and excitement gradually subsided, and he began more calmly to reflect upon what had taken place, all doubts as to the guilty party disappeared. Yet remembering the prophecy received by Rebekah, that "the elder should serve the younger," he became now convinced that the transfer of the birthright was "of the Lord," and would have come to pass without human aid. He therefore felt that as his younger son was destined to become the head of the family and heir of the promise, the blessing he had bestowed was unalterable, and exclaimed: "Yea, and he shall be blessed" (v. 33). The great importance and efficacy which the ancient Hebrews attached to parental blessings may be gathered from the words of Jesus the son of Sirach, who says: "The blessing of the father establishes the houses of

children, but the curse of the mother rooteth out the foundations," (Ecclesiasticus iii. 9). But the blessings of the patriarchs were of an infinitely higher order. Their utterances were made under inspiration, and are, therefore, Divine prophecies.

When Esau heard the words of his father, "he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry." The language is particularly emphatic, and indicates an intense and overpowering grief. Yet, to his praise be it said, he did not give vent to an angry word against his brother, but merely imploringly added, "Bless me also, O my father" (v. 34). It was only after Isaac himself alluded to Jacob's reprehensible conduct: "Thy brother came with cunning and took away thy blessing," (v. 35), that he uttered the acrimonious remark: "Is he not rightly named Jacob?" *i. e.* *supplanter*, "for he hath now supplanted me twice; he took away my birthright, and behold now he hath taken away my blessing" (v. 36). Esau, however, had no right to say that Jacob had taken away the birthright from him when he voluntarily sold it for a mess of pottage. But although Esau had despised his birthright, he evidently highly valued his father's blessing, for we see him imploring a second time, "Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?" And again, when Isaac informed him that he had constituted Jacob the head of the family, and blessed him with corn and wine, we see him still persisting in beseeching his father that he might bless him also. "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept" (v. 38). What a touching scene does the second narrative here present to us. The rude hunter, who seemed to care for nothing but his own pleasures, bowed down before his blind father, imploring him in tears for the blessing of which he had been deprived by the subtlety of his mother and his brother. Had Rebekah witnessed the scene, we doubt not but that she would have been moved to pity in seeing the anguish of her eldest son, and heartily have reproached herself for being the cause of it. Esau appears now to have learned to estimate the real value of the birthright which he had despised, but it was too late. The blessing had been conferred, and could not be revoked. For as the apostle Paul says: "For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears (Heb. xiii. 17). That is, he could not prevail upon his father, though beseeching him in tears to recall or change the blessing which he had bestowed upon Jacob. When Isaac said, "I have made him thy Lord" his language must not be construed to mean that it was *his act*, he only uses the ordinary prophetic language. Men speaking under inspiration are often represented as doing

themselves what they merely foretell *as surely coming to pass*. Thus Pharaoh's butler relating how Joseph had interpreted his and the chief baker's dreams, says: "And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored to mine office, and him he hanged," *i.e.*, foretold that it would be so. (Compare also Jer. i. 10: Ezek. xliii. 3).

39. *And Isaac, his father answered and said to him,
Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling,
And away from the dew of heaven from above.*

40. *And by thy sword shalt thou live, yet thou shalt serve thy brother;
And it shall come to pass when *thou exertest thyself,
Thou shalt break his yoke from thy neck.*

Isaac's position was indeed a distressing one. On the one hand his favorite son in tears persistently imploring him for a blessing; and on the other hand, not being able to predict any thing that would be likely to soothe the mind of the suppliant. And yet, he could not well let him depart without a cheering word. The patriarch's declaration can certainly not be called a blessing, for there is *little* in it of a consoling nature. But still there is a *little*, and that is contained in the prediction, "thou shalt break his yoke from thy neck." In order to arrive at the real meaning of Isaac's prediction, which mirrors the destiny of Esau's descendants, it is necessary to ascertain whether the preposition מִן (*mi*) in the words מִשְׁמַנִּי (*mishmanne*)

and מִטַּל (*mittal*) is only used in its ordinary sense *from*, and we are to translate "from the fatness," "from the dew," or whether it is here employed in the sense of *away from*, and

*The meaning of the verb תָּרִיד (*tarid*) in the above passage is somewhat obscure, and hence various renderings have been given of it. Saadia, in his Arabic Version, and Rabbi Kimchi, and other Jewish commentators, have rendered, "when thou shalt rule, thou wilt break the yoke," as if derived from רָדָה (*radah*) to rule. But this rendering is certainly very ambiguous. Gesenius renders, "and it shall be when thou shalt rove at large that thou shalt break his yoke from thy neck;" but it is not easily seen, how the Edomites could break the yoke by roving about. No more happy is the rendering given by Kalisch, Von Bohlen and others, "but when thou truly desirest it;" those who bear a foreign yoke are always truly desirous to shake it off, and this was certainly the case with the Edomites, who were constantly rebelling. In the Authorized Version it is rendered, "when thou shalt have dominion," which is similar to the rendering given by Saadia. In the Revised Version, it is rendered, "when thou shalt break loose, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck;" this rendering yields a feeble sense, for if a person breaks loose from restraint, he of course shakes off restraint. The rendering which I have given, appears to me to afford the most suitable sense, namely, that by *exertion* they will ultimately succeed to shake off the yoke. תָּרִיד (*tarid*) is evidently the fut. hiph. of רָדָה (*rud*) to wander about, but is no doubt used in our passage, with the accessory meaning to *exert oneself*. There are other renderings given, but which it is not necessary to notice.

accordingly have to translate, "away from the fatness," "away from the dew." In the Authorized Version the passage is rendered, "thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above," but there will be little difficulty to show that this rendering is inadmissible for various cogent reasons. In the first place, the blessings arising from the plentiful dew, and the fatness of the earth, have already been bestowed on Jacob, (v. 28,) and point to the possession of the promised land by his descendants. Those blessings could therefore not be bestowed upon Esau also; and accordingly Isaac himself said to Esau, "and with corn and wine I have sustained him: and what shall I now do for thee my son?" (v. 37.) Implying that every blessing had already been bestowed on Jacob. Secondly, if Isaac had had it in his power to bestow those blessings on Esau also, why should he have hesitated to bestow them on his favourite son? And thirdly, it would be impossible to shew that the prediction had been fulfilled. The region of Mount Seir, and the waste districts to the west and north west of it, inhabited by the Idumæans, the descendants of Esau, are exceedingly barren and desolate. The soil is parched by the burning rays of the sun. The absence of "the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven," render the industry of the husbandman abortive. It is said, that there is frequently for many miles no village, nor even a hut, to mark the tracks of a human being; and that those who, by ancestral traditions or indolence are still remaining in the country, live in subterraneous caves or tents. There are indeed some parts of the land of Edom, which are not so sterile as to defy cultivation altogether, and where vineyards and corn fields are to be met with (comp. Num. xx. 17;) but even they are said to produce little more than is actually necessary for immediate consumption. From the foregoing remarks it will now be readily seen how unsuitable the rendering of the English Version is. If we on the contrary render "away from the fatness of the earth, and away from the dew of heaven," the prediction has its fullest accomplishment. The descendants of Esau had their habitation "away from" the land upon which the blessings of heaven were showered, and which became the inheritance of the descendants of Jacob. The context absolutely requires the rendering "away from," and there is not the least objection to it on philological grounds. The proposition מִי (*mi*) is in other places of the Old Testament used in the sense of "away from," as for example, Num. xv. 24. מֵעֵינֵי הָעֵדָה (*me'ene ha'edah*), "away from the eyes of the congregation;" English Version, "without the knowledge of the congregation." (Comp. also Prov. xx. 3; and so in other places.) In the Revised Version, the ren-

dering "away from" is given in the margin;" and most of the Jewish and German interpreters render "weg von," *away from* or "ohne," *without*. (See, Von Bohlen, Dillmann, Delitzsch, Gesenius, and others.) "And by thy sword shalt thou live;" the sterile country being unfit for agricultural and pastoral pursuits, the Edomites were to obtain their livelihood by the chase, and by the spoil which they will obtain by their warlike weapons. The prediction implies that they will be in constant warfare with the neighbouring nations, and live a freebooting life. "Yet shalt thou serve thy brother;" notwithstanding the prowess of the descendants of Esau, they will yet be brought under the dominion of the kings of Judah. But this subjection will not be a lasting one. The Idumæans retained their independence until the reign of David, who subdued them, and thus was Isaac's prophecy fulfilled, that "the elder shall serve the younger." They were, however, continually endeavouring to shake off the yoke from their shoulders, and in this they partially succeeded at the end of the reign of Solomon, when Hadad, the Edomite, who had been carried into Egypt during his childhood, returned into his native country, and had himself acknowledged as the lawful king; (see Kings xi. 22). But he seemed to reign only in east Edom, the part south of Judea remained subject to the kings of Judah until the reign of Jehoram, against whom the Edomites rebelled, (see 2 Chron. xxi. 8). Amaziah, eighth king of Judah, took Petra, killed 1000 and compelled 10,000 more to leap from the rock, on which the city stood. In commemoration of this conquest he changed the name of Petra to יקחאל Jocktheël *i.e.*, *subdued of God*. But this conquest was by no means permanent. In the reign of Ahaz, the twelfth king of Judah, hordes of Edomites invaded Judah and carried off a great many captors (2 Chron. xxviii. 17). About the same time Rezin, king of Syria, expelled the Jews from Elath, and was then occupied by the Edomites. Thus was fulfilled the second part of Isaac's prophecy, that in course of time Esau should shake off his brother's yoke from off his neck. When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, the Edomites joined him, and encouraged him to raise the very foundation of the city. This circumstance re-kindled the hereditary hatred of the Jews to a still greater degree, and hence the bitter denunciations against Edom (Ps. cxxxvii. 7, 8, 9; Ezek. xxv. 12, 13, 14; xxv. &c).

Esau conceived now a fierce hatred against his brother for the wrong he had done him, and probably thinking that with the death of his brother the effects of the blessings would also become annihilated, he purposed in his mind to slay his brother as soon as the days of mourning for his father would have arrived (v. 41). This atrocious design banishes all sympathy which

we may have hitherto cherished for Esau. Although Esau, according to verse 41, merely "said in his heart" that he would slay his brother, yet he must have divulged his design to some one, for in verse 42 it is stated, "And these words of Esau, her elder son, were told Rebekah." As soon as the fond mother heard of the imminent danger in which her favourite son stood of losing his life, she immediately sent for him, and entreated him to flee to her brother Laban, and remain with him until his brother's anger shall be turned away and forget the injury he had received, and then be able to return in safety. In order the more readily to gain the consent of Jacob to leave his loved home, she represents to him that his death would also involve the death of his brother, "Why should I be bereaved of both of you in one day?" In these words, Rebekah evidently alludes to the custom of revenging the blood by the nearest relative. Had Esau succeeded in carrying out his murderous design, it would have been the duty of the nearest relative to avenge the blood of Jacob by killing Esau. We have already stated that the observance of this custom is still exercised among the Mohammedans to an alarming extent. (See Burckhardt, Notes on the Bedouins p. 85.) It is for this reason that an Arab hesitates to tell his name or that of his father or of his tribe to a stranger, lest there might exist a blood-feud between them. They even take the precaution to impress upon the children the necessity of observing this precaution. (See Layard, Nineveh and Babylon p. 305.)

46. *And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, of what avail is life to me?*

Rebekah could not send Jacob away from his home without first obtaining his father's consent. Not wishing, however, to grieve her aged and infirm husband by telling him of the murderous intention of Esau, she represented to him the danger of Jacob taking a wife from the hated daughters of Heth, as his brother did which was the source of so much grief to them, and that it was therefore desirable that he should journey into Mesopotamia to her family, and take a wife from her relations. We learn from the next chapter, that Isaac readily acquiesced in her proposal.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. *And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.*

2. *Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take for thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother.*

We can readily understand that Isaac would be highly pleased with his wife's proposal. Indeed we may take it for granted, that he himself before his death would either have proposed the same thing, or adopted a similar plan to that of his father, in order to procure a wife for Jacob from his relations in Mesopotamia. Before Jacob's departure, Isaac bestowed upon him "the blessing of Abraham," that is the blessing of promise which Abraham had received from the Lord, (comp. xvii. 8; xxii. 17 18.) By the bestowal of this blessing (vv. 3. 4.), Isaac ratified the blessing which he had previously given to Jacob unawares.

6. *And Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram to take to himself a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;*

7. *And that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;*

8. *And when Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased Isaac his father;*

9. *Then Esau went to Ishmael, and took, besides the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.*

From the circumstance of sending Jacob away from his home into a distant land to take a wife from his mother's relatives, Esau evidently perceived—if he had not perceived it before—how utterly detestible his marriage with the Hittite women, must be in the eyes of his parents. In order, therefore, to ingratiate himself into his father's favour, he resolved to marry a daughter of Ishmael, thinking no doubt that if Jacob's marrying a relative of his mother was pleasing to his parents, surely his marrying a relative of his father would be still more so. But it is quite evident that Esau in taking this step was not actuated by a sincere desire to make amends for his unrighteous marriage with the Hittite women, for he still retained them, and thus added sin to sin. Had his real aim been to please his parents, he would have put away the women which

were the cause of so much grief to them. Esau's conduct seems to have been rather actuated by a hope of gaining his father's favour in order to obtain from him a blessing more favourable to his worldly prospects, than the blessing which had been bestowed upon him on a former occasion. In this, however, he did not succeed. The expression, "Then Esau went to Ishmael," must be understood, that he went to the family of Ishmael, for Ishmael himself had now been dead about fourteen years.

10. *And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went towards Haran.*

As a lonely wanderer Jacob departed from his father's roof. He had neither a servant to accompany him, nor a beast to carry him, the staff in his hand was his sole companion in his solitary journey. (Comp. ch. xxxii. 10.) What a contrast to the manner in which Abraham forty years before had sent his eldest servant to the same country and to the same family, accompanied by servants and camels, with all the signs of Asiatic grandeur, bearing "Jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiments and precious things." But why was this so? Isaac was rich in servants and rich in beasts, why allow a beloved child set out on a long and dreary journey, beset by many dangers, all alone and on foot? There can be no other reason, than to elude the watchful eye of Esau, to give Jacob an opportunity to be some distance on his way, before his brother would discover his absence. Who can pursue this portion of the history of Jacob, and yet believe he was not punished for having turned aside from the straight path of probity and truth? And who can picture to himself the pangs of remorse of the fugitive, and the gloomy and distressful thoughts that arose in his mind whilst pursuing his dreary way? We may here mention that the distance from Beer-sheba to Haran was about four hundred and fifty miles, the country to be traversed is in many parts exceedingly desert, and dangerous on account of wild beasts and wayfaring marauders. Jacob, at the time of his departure for Padan-aram, was already seventy-eight years old. The narrative does not state the age, but it may be obtained as follows: Jacob remained with Laban twenty years, fourteen of these he served for his two wives, Rachel and Leah (xxxi. 38). Soon after the birth of Joseph, Jacob desired to return to his own country (xxx. 25); but at the earnest entreaty of Laban, he remained six years longer (xxxi. 41). Joseph was therefore about seven years old when his father returned to Canaan. Ten years later Joseph was sold into Egypt (xxxvii. 2). And thirteen years after this event, when he was thirty years old, he stood before Pharaoh

(xli. 46). Then came the seven years of plenty, and when two years of the famine had elapsed Jacob went down into Egypt (xlv. 6), and according to xlvii. 9, he was 130 years old. It will thus be seen that from the time of Jacob's departure to Padan-aram to his immigration into Egypt, there elapsed 20 years + 10 + 13 + 7 + 2, or 52 years. If we now deduct these 52 years from the 130 years, it will give us 78 years as the age of Jacob when he left his home.

11. *And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there over night, for the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place.*

Jacob had now travelled several days, for the place here spoken of is forty-eight miles from Beer-sheba. Having lighted upon a certain place—or rather, according to the literal rendering of the original, “in the place,” which seems to indicate that it was a divinely appointed place—and being overtaken by nightfall “he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head.” In the Authorized Version it is rendered, “and he took of the stones of that place and put *them*,” which the original will certainly admit of, for it will be seen from the words *one* and *it* being in italics that they are not in the original. But the rendering of the Authorized Version would form a contradiction to what is stated in verse 18, where it is distinctly said that “Jacob took the stone which he had put under his head, and set it up *for a monument*.” The rendering in the Authorized Version of the word מראשותיו* (*mera'ashotav*) by “for his pillows” is not admissible. According to other places where the word occurs it denotes *the place at the head or under the head*. (Comp. 1 Sam. xix. 13, 16; xxvi. 7; 1 Kings xix. 6.) The Revised Version has the same rendering as we have given.

Jacob had been destined before his birth to be the heir of the promise, and now God appears to him in a dream and confirms to him all the promises made to Abraham.

12. *And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.*

13. *And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.*

It can hardly be denied that the scene which the sacred narrative here brings before us has a symbolical meaning. We have above hinted, that from the phraseology in the original,

* Occurs only with a plural form.

it appears that the place where Jacob lighted upon was divinely appointed. It must have been near the city Luz, for in commemoration of the event of the night he changed its name to Beth-el (v. 19.) Yet he did not enter the town where Oriental hospitality would have secured for him comfort and safety, but he passed the night in the open field, where he was exposed to the attacks of wild beasts and marauding Bedouins. But God shielded him from all danger; and is it too much to say, that the protection here vouchsafed to the ancestor of the chosen people was intended to symbolize the fatherly care which God would hereafter bestow upon Israel and upon His church? The ladder resting upon the earth and its top reaching to heaven, symbolizes the fellowship between God in heaven with his people upon earth. And the angels ascending and descending the ladder, teaches that every thing is under the guidance and control of the Almighty; the ministering angels carry up the sincere prayers and petitions of men to God, and bring down assistance and protection. God standing at the top of the ladder, symbolizes that He is the source from whom all blessings flow. We have already stated (Vol. I. 90) that supernatural dreams, were known from ordinary meaningless dreams, by having in all cases left a certain impression on the mind of the dreamer, which made him sensible that the dream he had dreamed foreboded some event of the highest importance. And this will account for the great anxiety evinced always for discovering its meaning; as was the case with the butler and baker of Pharaoh, with Pharaoh himself, and with Nebuchadnezzar. So likewise when Jacob awoke he felt powerfully impressed with the reality of the dream, and in wonderment mingled with reverential awe, he exclaimed, "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not;" "How dreadful is this place; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (vv. 16, 17.) Jacob could not show his thankfulness to the Almighty by offering a sacrifice; his staff was all that he possessed, but he did all that under the circumstances he was able to do. He "took the stone which he had put under his head, and set it up for a monument, and poured oil on its top," (v. 18) by which act he consecrated it, and set it apart to God. (Comp. Exod. xl. 9, 11); and no doubt offered up his devout thankfulness for the gracious promises made to him. When Jacob left his home, he was no doubt provided with as much provision as he could conveniently carry, and as oil was largely used among the ancients for various purposes, especially for healing wounds, a little cruse of oil would naturally form a part of his stock of provision. It is not a little remarkable that we not only find that many ancient nations have adopted the practice of erecting sacred stones, but that even

in some instances the very names they gave to those stones, though clothed in foreign garbs, still unmistakably show that they are identical with the name "Beth-el," which Jacob gave to the place. The *Black Stone* in the temple of the Kaaba—otherwise called *Beit-allah*, i. e., the house of God—which is still to be seen at Mecca, and which the Mahomedans say had been brought from heaven by the angel Gabriel, and erected there. Eusebius, and other ancient writers speak of the custom in early times of erecting pillars of stone and anointing them with oil for religious purposes. The Greeks made also use of such sacred stones, they called them *βαρύλια*, *Bairylia* (Plin. 37, 51,) which is acknowledged to be identical with the Hebrew *Beth-el*. Morier, in his "Second Journey through Persia," says, that he noticed his guide occasionally placing a stone or two stones one upon another in some conspicuous place, and uttering a prayer for the safe return of the party.

19. *And he called the name of that place Beth-el ; but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.*

Jacob did not call the name of the place whereon he had slept Beth-el, i. e., the house of God, but in commemoration of the event he changed the name of the city Luz, which was near by to Beth-el.

20. *And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,*

21. *And I return again to my father's house in peace, and the LORD is my God ;*

22. *Then this stone, which I have set for a monument, shall be God's house ; and all that Thou wilt give me, I shall surely give the tenth part to Thee.*

Jacob does not content himself with merely consecrating the stone as a memorial of the event, but makes also a solemn vow that if God would fulfil what He had promised in the dream, to guard him wherever he would go, and bring him back to his father's house in peace, in short, that if God would be a God to him as he was to his ancestors, he would then in a more special manner consecrate the place. This he did on his return by erecting an altar in the place. (Comp. ch. xxxv. 7.)

In the Authorized Version the phrase יהיה יהוה לי לעזרהים (*wehayah Jehovah li lelohim*) is rendered "then shall the LORD be my God." This rendering, it will be seen, represents Jacob as making his acknowledging Jehovah as his God conditional

on God's fulfilling His promises to him, which would certainly be a flimsy basis to rest his religion on. But Jacob had, no doubt, from his youth acknowledged Jehovah as his God; he is, as we have seen in ch. xxv. 27, called *אִישׁ יָשָׁר* (*ish tam*), "a perfect" or "upright man." Some commentators, adhering to the rendering of the Authorized Version, explain the passage, that Jacob would then utterly renounce all superstitious and idolatrous practices of the surrounding nations, and worship God alone. But it is a gratuitous assumption that Jacob had at any time been in the least given to heathen practices. He certainly would not have been called "a perfect man," if such had been the case. It is proper to state that the original certainly admits of the rendering given in the Authorized Version; but as we have already stated that in cases where a passage admits of a twofold translation, we must entirely be guided by the context. The rendering which we have given is not only given by many eminent orthodox interpreters, but even by many rationalistic writers. In the Revised Version, too, although the rendering of the Authorized Version is retained in the text, yet in the margin the rendering, "and the LORD will be my God" is given. In this case where everything is in favour of the rendering given in the margin, and nothing can be urged in favour of the one given in the text, we think, the revisers might very properly have adopted the former altogether.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1. *Then Jacob lifted up his feet, and came into the land of the children of the east.*

The sacred writer in speaking of Jacob leaving his home, made use of the ordinary expression *וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב* (*waiyetse yaakov*) "And Jacob went out" (xxviii. 10); but now, in speaking of his resuming his journey after he had seen the vision, he makes use of the expression: "Then Jacob lifted up his feet" (Eng. Vers. "Then Jacob went out"), the phrase implies that he now went on his journey cheerfully and briskly. The promise he had received in the dream, had made him altogether a different person, all gloomy thoughts were now dispelled, and the future laid now before him bright and serene. A Jewish writer has very pertinently remarked, "His heart lifted up his feet." Although he had yet four hundred miles to traverse before he reached his destination,

and much fatigue to endure, and probably many dangers to encounter, yet the promise that God would be with him and protect him, cheered him in his lonely way, and removed all fear of harm. "And he came into the land of the children of the east." The term בני קדם (*bene kedem*) "children of the east, generally denotes the Arabs inhabiting the country in the east of Palestine, but is here extended to the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, as that country was lying still more eastward, beyond the Euphrates.

2. And he looked and behold, a well in the field, and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they drew water: and the stone upon the mouth of the well was great.

The journey of the four hundred miles had evidently been accomplished without any thing occurring worthy of notice, for the whole account of it is contained in the preceding verse. Jacob before entering the town apparently had halted in a field where there was a well. The well here spoken of, is however, not the same well at which Abraham's steward had halted. That well was before the town, this one was further off in a field. The other well was a natural one, which furnished water for the use of the inhabitants, this one was a cistern in which water was collected to water the flocks. This well was covered with a great stone, as it was in the open field it was liable to be filled up with the drifting sand. But it may be asked where was the necessity for using such a heavy stone? There probably were two reasons for this. In the first place, to prevent one party from taking an undue share to the injury of other shepherds. Secondly, to prevent the well from being too often opened and exposed to the flying dust. The shepherds therefore assembled with their flocks at the well, and by their combined strength removed and replaced the stone. The meeting with the shepherds in the field afforded Jacob an opportunity to obtain some information regarding his mother's family, but as they might after all have come from some distant part of the country, he naturally first inquired of them, "My brethren, whence are you?" and having received the welcome answer, "From Haran are we," he now asked them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" i. e. the descendant of Nahor, for Laban was the son of Bethuel, and grandson of Nahor. But the word בן (*ben*) son is often used to denote a more remote descendant. The shepherds having answered Jacob's question in the affirmative, "We know him," he now asked them הַשָּׁלוֹם לֵךְ (*hashalom lo*) "Is he well," or more literally "Is there peace to him?" We may remark that the meaning of the Hebrew word

not at
all; it
refers to
Mesopota-
mia of
Syria.

שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*), is very comprehensive, it denotes *peace, health, prosperity, welfare*. Hence very appropriately used in Oriental salutation "peace be with you." The shepherds replied "*He is well* ; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep," (v. 6).

7. *And he said, Behold, the day is still high* (lit. great) ; it is not yet time that the cattle should be gathered ; *water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.*

Having been told that Rachel was coming with the sheep, Jacob evidently was anxious to get the shepherds away in order that his meeting with his cousin might not be witnessed by strangers. He represented to the shepherds therefore, that as the day was still high, and not nearly time to gather the sheep into their folds for the night, they had better water the flocks, and drive them again to pasture. The shepherds might have regarded this as a presumptuous interference on the part of a perfect stranger, and taken it as a reproach for neglecting their duty. But Jacob's deportment towards them during their conversation was probably of such a nature, as to convince them that he was of a kind disposition, and hence looked upon what he had said, as having been uttered in a friendly and well-meaning spirit, and without being in the least offended, explained to him that they were obliged to wait "until all the flocks are gathered," in order to roll the great stone from the mouth of the well. Whilst Jacob was yet conversing with the shepherds, "Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she *was* a shepherdess" (v. 9). That the daughter of such a considerable person as Laban was tending the flocks, shows that the occupation was not considered by females of distinction to be beneath their station. From Exod. ii. 16, we learn that the priest of Midian had seven daughters who attended to their father's flock. And the eminent traveller Burckhardt says: that the practice for unmarried women to attend to the flocks still prevails among the Arabs of the peninsula of Sinai. Three or four generally go together, they set out early in the morning, and return in the evening. They are said to be very civil to strangers passing by, and gladly share with them their food and milk. They are also spoken of as being exceedingly brave in defending their flocks. (Burckh. Bedou. 283).

10. *And when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, Jacob approached, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.*

The language in our verse admits of no doubt, that Jacob

unaided by any one rolled the great stone from the mouth of the well. We can easily imagine, that the sight of his beautiful cousin would induce him to apply his utmost strength on the occasion, still it was a feat which he could not possibly have performed unless he had been supported by supernatural aid. The achievement of such a wonderful act must have made Rachel and the shepherds to look upon the stranger with admiration and reverence as one being endowed with supernatural strength. The reader in perusing the verse will perceive, that the phrase "his mother's brother," occurs no less than three times. This evidently was designedly in order to show that Jacob acted as a *relative*.

11. *And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.*

Viewed from our modern standard of etiquette and customs, Jacob kissing Rachel before he had made himself known as her cousin, will appear as an undue liberty, if not as an insult; but we must be careful in reading the Scriptures, not to judge of the acts of those ancient times, by the more restrained, and we may add more refined manners and customs of modern civilization. We are always ready in reading English history, to make allowance for acts which do not come up to the standard of the present prevailing laws of society. Jacob had been suddenly driven from the society of his loving mother, and seeing now, after a long and weary journey through a strange land, the daughter of his mother's brother standing before him, overwhelmed by his feelings, "he kissed Rachel" in accordance with the beautiful affections and simple manners of the patriarchal age. "And he lifted up his voice and wept." He wept from his heart overflowing with joyful emotions. Thus we read that Joseph fell upon his brother's neck, and wept (ch. xlv. 14). So also when Joseph met with his father (ch. xlv. 29).

12. *And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father.*

Here again we have to draw the readers notice to the words *אחי אביה* (*achi aviha*), being in the Authorized and Revised Versions rendered "her father's brother," instead of "her father's kinsman," which is apt to perplex the ordinary reader who may not be acquainted with the Hebrew usage of expressing "kinsman" by *אח* (*ach*), *brother*. He would naturally feel puzzled, to see Laban no less than three times in verse 10 spoken of as "his mother's brother," and in verse 12 Jacob call himself "her father's brother."

As soon as Laban heard of the arrival of his sister's son, he lost no time to bring him to his house; "he ran to meet him," and heartily "embraced him and kissed him." Jacob told Laban now "all these things" (v. 13.) What were these things? Evidently, all the circumstances connected with his leaving his father's house with nothing but his staff, and the little prospect he had of his soon returning home again. But Laban's kind feelings towards his nephew were not in the least lessened on account of his destitute condition, on the contrary, he seemed even to feel more warmly for him, for he exclaimed: "Surely thou art my bone and my flesh" (v. 14). "And he abode with him a month's time," or more literally "a month of days," *i. e.*, a full month (v. 14); by which we have to understand, that Jacob rendered Laban a full month's service without receiving any remuneration for it, for the context shows that he did not leave his uncle's house. But Laban was too just to accept the services of his relative without compensating him for it, and at the end of the month he asked him to fix his wages.

16. *And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.*

17. *And the eyes of Leah were tender; but Rachel was beautiful in form and beautiful in appearance.*

18. *And Jacob loved Rachel, and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.*

Jacob, mindful of his paternal injunction, not to take a wife from the daughters of the Canaanites, but to go to his mother's family to choose a wife for himself (ch. xxviii. 1) and loving Rachel for she was beautiful, at once offered to serve Laban seven years for her. The seven years service was intended instead of the usual dowry or presents which it was customary to give to the parents or relatives, as he had neither money nor goods to give. Thus Shechem offers Dinah's father and brothers whatever dowry and gift they might ask (ch. xxxiv. 12). Compare also ch. xxiv. 33, 1 Sam. xxiii. 23-25. This custom existed among many eastern people, and still prevails among the Bedouins. The celebrated eastern Traveller, Burckhardt, in his Travels in Syria says, "I once met with a young man who had served eight years for his food only; at the end of that period he received in marriage his master's daughter, for whom he would otherwise have had to pay seven or eight hundred piasters." And in his account of Kerek, he mentions as a customary thing for a young man without any property, to serve five or six years as a servant instead of a dowry for a girl. No doubt this custom was liable to be greatly abused by unfeeling and avaricious parents, but what

custom is altogether safe against abuse? Among the more civilized tribes, however, it was the law that the consent of the daughters must first be obtained, and among some of them it was even customary to give the money or goods received by the parents to the young married couple. Many commentators have erroneously accounted for Laban accepting the seven years service for each of his two daughters, that it was in accordance with a prevailing custom amongst the ancient Hebrews of selling daughters to husbands. But there is not the slightest ground for supposing that such a custom existed among them. The mere receiving of presents from a son-in-law can no more reasonably be looked upon as *selling a daughter*, than we would look upon the giving of a dowry as *purchasing a husband*. Laban accepting such a long service, must be ascribed to his selfishness, for although the offer came from his nephew himself, he should have dealt more liberally. "And the eyes of Leah were tender." This is especially mentioned, not only as a contrast to the beautiful form and beautiful appearance of Rachel, but also because among the Orientals, and especially among the Arabs, bright, fiery, and lively black eyes are regarded as the height of beauty of women. The name רַחֵל Rachel, signifies a *lamb*.

19. *And Laban said, it is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.*

Even to the present day, among the Bedouin Arabs and other tribes, marriages between cousins are in special favour, and they call themselves cousins even after their marriage. Hence Laban says, "It is better," that is more in accordance with the custom, "that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man." "And Jacob served Laban seven years for Rachel," but the seven long years appeared to pass so swiftly, that they seemed to him *but a few days*, for the love he had for her." The daily society of the object he loved, made him happy and content, and with those that are happy and contented, time never hangs wearily upon them.

At the end of the seven years Jacob demanded Rachel for his wife, and Laban, according to the custom of the age, made a great feast, at which "all the men of the place" (v. 22), were invited. In the evening, as was customary in the East, the bride was conducted to the bridal chamber in darkness, and entirely covered by a veil. Under such favourable circumstances, Laban could easily consummate the fraud of substituting Leah for Rachel. Thus Jacob, who had practised deceit upon his aged father, had now deceit practised upon himself. He, who by subtilty had deprived his brother of the father's blessing, is now in turn by subtilty, deprived of

the object he so dearly loved. When Jacob remonstrated with Laban in having deceived him, the latter endeavoured to justify his wicked act on the ground that it was contrary to the custom of his country to give the younger before the elder in marriage (v. 26). That such a custom may have prevailed in Mesopotamia, is quite probable. Such a law certainly existed in India (Manu. 3 160). But Laban should have informed Jacob of the existence of such a custom at the time the latter offered to serve seven years for Rachel, and refused to accept his offer on that ground. We can, therefore, come to no other conclusion, but that Laban, from the beginning, had made up his mind to practise this fraud upon his nephew for selfish purposes. The mild manner in which Jacob complained of the treatment he had received is deserving of the highest praise; "What is this thou hast done unto me? did I not serve thee for Rachel? Wherefore hast thou deceived me" (v. 26)? Luther greatly admired Jacob's conduct on this occasion, and considered it almost super-human, and confessed that under similar circumstances he would hardly have been able to display so much patience.

27. *Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this one also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.*

"Fulfil her week." The feast which was made in celebration of a marriage generally lasted seven days. Thus according to Judges xiv. 12, 17, 18, Samson's marriage feast lasted seven days. So "Tobias's wedding was kept seven days with great joy." (Tobit. xi. 18). And Laban here proposes that Jacob should first finish the festive week for Leah, and that after that he would give also Rachel for seven years more service. Laban in accordance with the custom of the country gave to each of his daughters a maid-servant, to Leah he gave Zilpah, and Rachel he gave Bilhah. These servants form, as it were, a link between the new home of the bride and the home she has left. Very frequently the nurse also accompanies the young wife. And, indeed, the maid-servant and nurse form the principle part of the dowry. Jacob's affections had first been bestowed upon Rachel, no wonder then that he loved her more than Leah. It is quite probable too, that he felt that Leah had borne a voluntary part in the deception which had been practised upon him, and it certainly does not appear that she remonstrated with her father about the injustice he intended to perpetrate. Still it is quite clear that when it is said: "And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated" (v. 31.), when taken in connection with what is said in the preceding verse, that Jacob "loved Rachel more than Leah," it means nothing more than that Leah was *less loved*, and not actually *hated*.

There is nothing in the sequel of the narrative to show that Jacob *hated* Leah, though he loved her less than Rachel. The verb שָׂנֵא (*sana*), *to hate*, seems to be used sometimes in such comparative phrases to denote a *less degree of love*. Thus Deut. xxi. 15: "If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated," that is *less loved*, the first born son of the one less loved was not to be deprived of his birthright and conferred on "the son of the beloved" if he is younger. And so we think may be explained the passage in Malachi i. 2, 3; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau"; that is, God had shown a greater degree of love for Jacob and his posterity, than for Esau and his descendants, but not actually *hated* Esau.

The mode of expression is used in the New Testament thus: Matt. vi. 24, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other," which seems simply to mean, that he can not bear an equal love for both masters, and have their interest equally at heart. So again, Luke xiv. 26, "If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, &c.;" this surely does not mean actually "hate" father and mother, but *love father and mother less*. Leah naturally felt deeply that she did not share equally in the affections of her husband with her sister, and it was the cause of much grief to her. We can, therefore, readily understand that anything that was likely to gain for her a greater share of her husband's love would be hailed with the greatest delight, and thus, when the mortified Leah gave birth to her first-born son, she called him רְאוּבֵן "Reuben," *i. e. see ye a son*, expressive of her thankfulness to God for this mercy, and the great joy of her heart, "for she said, surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction: for now my husband will love me" (v. 32). Her second son she called שִׁמְעוֹן (*Shimon*) "Simeon," *i. e. a hearing*; "and she said, surely the LORD hath heard that I am hated, and He hath given me this son also," (v. 33,) again expressing her thankfulness to God for having mercifully regarded her misery. The third son she called לֵוִי "Levi," *i. e. joining or attachment*, for she said, "Now this time will my husband be joined to me;" that is, will surely become fully attached to me, "for I have born him three sons" (v. 34). Her fourth son she called יְהוּדָה (*Jehudah*) "Judah," *i. e. praise*, for she said, "This time I will praise the LORD," that is, express her thankfulness to the Almighty, in which all other considerations are absorbed. "And she ceased from bearing" (v. 35), that is, 'ceased from bearing' for a time, for according to the following chapter she had three more children.

CHAPTER XXX.

1. *And when Rachel saw that she bore to Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and she said to Jacob, Give me children : and if not, I die.*

One would have expected that Rachel being endowed with surpassing beauty, and possessing the perfect love of her husband, would have been contented and happy. But we perceive from our verse that such was far from being the case. Seeing that Leah had borne four sons, she envied her sister, and not only displayed a want of sisterly love, but also a most impetuous temper. "Give me children," she demanded of her husband, "or else I die" out of grief. In this unreasonable demand Jacob very properly perceived a want of faith and submission to the will of God on the part of Rachel, and did not allow the great love he bore for her to hinder him from administering the merited rebuke. Even his affections were for the time changed into anger against the wife he doted upon, and said, "*Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb*" (v. 2)? No doubt many in reading our verse will see nothing in the conduct of Rachel but what is blameable. Such, however, would be taking an extreme view of the case. We must always, in judging of an act, carefully examine the motive that prompted it. Now Rachel's great desire to have children was quite in accordance with the eager desire for offspring amongst the Hebrew women. Sterile people were held in contempt among the ancient Israelites, whilst the more children a person had, the more he was honored, it being considered as a mark of Divine favor. (Compare Ps. cxxvii. 3, *et seq.*, cxxviii. 3, 4.) It has been very properly remarked that "the eager desire for offspring among the Hebrew women is easily accounted for if we bear in mind that the distinguishing blessing to Abraham was a numerous posterity, and in particular one illustrious person in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. It was natural, then, that they should feel a laudable ambition to contribute to the fulfilment of the prophecy. It will probably be asked, How did the daughters of Laban, who still had his household gods, become acquainted with the promises made to Abraham? To this we reply, that Jacob, during his many years abode in his uncle's family, no doubt continually spoke of the God of his fathers, and narrated the wonderful manifestations and the promises He had made to them. He was, no doubt, assiduous in instructing them in the worship of his God, and we find that both Leah and Rachel make reference to Jacob's God alone.

The rivalry, and ill feeling, if not hatred, that sprung up between the sisters after they became the wives of Jacob, which put an end to the sisterly love that had before their marriage existed between them, and also destroyed the domestic peace of Jacob's household, demonstrate in a forcible manner, the wisdom, and necessity of the prohibition, "And thou shalt not take a wife unto her sister, to cause jealousy (or enmity), besides the other בַּחַיָּה (*bechaiyeha*) in her life time." (Lev. xviii. 18.

Rachel's envious spirit showed itself now in another way. She gave her maid-servant Bilhah to Jacob for a wife. The handmaid was the sole property of her mistress, and when given by the mistress to her husband to wife, the children that she bore became also the property of the mistress. Hence, when Bilhah bore a son, "Rachel said, God had judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son; therefore she called his name Dan." (v. 16.) The name דָּן "*Dan*," signifies *judge*, because God hath heard her prayer and procured for her justice, by removing from her the reproach of childlessness. It appears from Rachel's words, that after Jacob had admonished her for demanding of him what was not in his power to give, she prayed to God to grant her offspring. Envy, however, still lingered in Rachel's heart, for when Bilhah bore a second son, she exultingly exclaimed, "*with* struggles of God have I struggled with my sister and have prevailed; and she called his name נַפְתָּלִי *Naphtali*," *i. e.*, *my fought one*. The meaning of Rachel's exclamation evidently is, that by constant prayer to God have I struggled with my sister, that is, to be made her equal in being blessed with offspring, and have prevailed. It is proper to mention that in the Authorized Version the words נַפְתָּלִי אֱלֹהִים (*naphtali: Elohim*) are rendered "great wrestlings," and in the Revised Version, "mighty wrestlings," both renderings are quite admissible, for we have already stated that by a Hebrew idiom, one of the names of the Deity is used to give intensity of meaning to the subject spoken of, forming a superlative degree. Thus "cedars of God," *i. e.*, the most excellent cedars (Ps. lxxx. 10). The rendering of the Authorized Version is also adopted by many commentators, but in our passage, the rendering we have given is no doubt more suitable. The other rendering would leave it altogether undefined in what Rachel's wrestling consisted of. When Leah ceased bearing, and probably fearing that she might lose ground in her husband's affections, adopted the plan of her sister, and gave Zilpah, her maid, to her husband to wife. And when she bore a son, she called him גַּד "*Gad*", that is *good fortune*, for

she said, בֵּגַד * (*begad*), "with good fortune," or if we adopt the marginal reading בָּא גַד (*ba gad*), "good fortune has come" (v. 11.), which certainly affords a better sense. Zilpah bare to Jacob a second son (v. 12), and Leah called him אֲשֶׁר "*Asher*," i. e., *bringer of happiness*, for she said: "For my happiness; for the daughters will call me happy," (v. 13, that is, a happy mother blessed with children.

14. *And Reuben went in the days of wheat-harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. And Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.*

The Hebrew term for mandrakes is דּוּדָאִים (*dudaim*) *love apples*, or *love fruit*, and no doubt so called from the common belief, that both the root and fruit possess the properties exciting the passions of love. The same notion was also entertained among the Greeks and Romans. Dioscorides, a Greek physician, who flourished in the first or second century of the Christian era, says: That the root was used in philters or love potions, And the emperor Julian in his epistle to Calixenes states, that he drank the juice of the mandrake to excite love. Venus herself was called *Mandragorites*. Greek physicians employed the root as a means for allaying pains. When the root is eaten boiled, it produces madness, and hence Pythagoras conferred the name *anthropomorphos* on the plant. The Arabs call it *tufah-al sheitan*, i. e., the *devils apple*. The flowers are small, and have a very fragrant odour, "the mandrakes give a smell" (Cant. vii. 14). The fruit is the size of a small egg, and of a yellow colour. Hasselquist, speaking of Nazareth in Galilee, says: "What I found most remarkable at this village was the great number of *mandrakes* which grew in a valley below it. I had not the pleasure to see this plant in blossom, the fruit now (May 5th) hanging ripe on the stems, which lay withered on the ground." This agrees with the "wheat-harvest" mentioned in our verse, which occurs generally in the month of May. In Mesopotamia, however, the mandrakes are not plentiful, and this circumstance will account for Rachel being so anxious to obtain some. The root has some resemblance to the human form, and is about four feet long. Its botanical name now is *mandragora vernalis*.

*The marginal reading בָּא גַד (*ba gad*), i. e., *good fortune has come*, is also found in some manuscripts, and has also been adopted by Onkelos in his Chaldee Version, who renders אֲתָא גַד (*atha gad*), i. e., *good fortune has come*. In the Authorized Version the rendering "a troop cometh," is given, the translators have evidently followed the marginal reading, but have translated גַד (*Gad*) by "troop" which is not admissible. In the Revised Version, it is rendered in the text "and Leah said fortunate," and in the margin "with fortune." So in the Septuagint ἐν τύχῃ *with good fortune*, and in the Vulgate "Feliciter" *fortunately*.

Leah bore now another son, and she called his name *יִשָּׂשכָר (Yissoschar) "Issachar," meaning either *there is reward* or *he brings* or *bears reward*. She apparently gave that name under the erroneous notion, that God hath bestowed this son upon her as a reward for having given her maid to Jacob. When she bore her sixth son, she called him זְבֻלֹן "Zebulun,"

denoting *a dwelling*, and she assigns as a reason for having given that name, that "now will my husband dwell with me," that is, become more attached to her, "because I have borne him six sons." Leah also bore a daughter, and called her name "Dinah." Although Jacob had, according to ch. xxxvii. 35; and ch. xli. 7, other daughters, yet this one is the only one mentioned by name. The reason why the exception is made in regard to Dinah seems to be, on account of the occurrence related concerning her in ch. xxxiv.

At length "God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her prayer," and gave her a son also, and the happy mother, seeing the desire of her heart granted, joyfully exclaimed: "God hath taken away my reproach," namely, the reproach of barrenness.

24. *And she called his name Joseph, saying, The LORD may add to me another son.*

Rachel, in calling her son יוֹסֵף (Yoseph) "Joseph," evidently intended to combine in it the two ideas: *the removal of her reproach* (v. 23), and the prayer that *God may add another son*—both these meanings may be deduced from it. (See note below.)

Jacob had now completed the fourteen years of servitude, and having a large family of his own it was natural that he would be desirous to return to his home, to look after his paternal inheritance. Be it also remembered that Jacob had now attained to the age of ninety years, and had nothing that he could call his own, as he had been serving Laban "the fourteen years" for his two daughters. When Jacob, however, asked Laban to send him away, the latter frankly enough admitted that he had learned by experience that the LORD had blessed him for Jacob's sake, and begged his nephew to remain yet longer with him,

* יִשָּׂשכָר is either a compound of יֵשׁ שָׂכָר *there is reward*, or of יֵשׁא שָׂכָר *he brings or bears reward*.

יֹסֵף may be a contracted form of יֵאסֵף *he will take away*, from אָסַף; or it may be the fut. apoc. Hiphil, *he may add* of יָסַף. The fut. apoc. used to express a *wish* or *desire*. On examining verses 23, 24, it will at once be seen that both ideas are required to be combined in the name.

and to state himself what wages he demanded. Jacob, in reply, reminded his uncle that when he came to serve him his cattle were but few, but now by God's blessing they had increased into a multitude, and it was now time to make provision for his own household. When Laban, however, again pressed him to state what remuneration he desired, Jacob replied that he would only remain on the condition that a certain portion of the cattle should become his own property. And now followed the agreement which has brought upon Jacob the accusation of duplicity, fraud, and cunningness.

32. *I will pass through all thy flock to-day, to remove from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the black cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire.*

33. *And my righteousness shall answer for me in time to come, when thou shalt come concerning my hire that is before thee (i. e. when thou comest to inspect my hire): every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, that shall be accounted as stolen with me.*

34. *And Laban said, Behold, may it be according to thy word.*

The offer which Jacob made to his uncle, simply amounted to this, namely, that after this all the sheep born, which were either entirely black, or having black spots, and the goats which were either entirely white, or having white spots were to belong to him, as a reward for his services in tending the flocks. This offer, we perceive, was readily accepted by Laban. And well it might, for in the ordinary nature of things the advantage was all on his side. In the East the sheep are generally *white*, hence the prophet Isaiah says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall become as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. (Is. 1. 18.) Whilst the goats are generally black. Hence Solomon speaks of the Shulamite's black and luxuriant abundance of hair:

Thy hair is like a flock of goats,
That repose on the side of Mount Gilead.

(Song of Solomon. iv 2.)

And travellers likewise speak of the black and glossy hair of the goats in Palestine. Sheep marked with black spots, and goats either entirely white or having white spots are rarely met with. The reader will therefore perceive that the offer which Jacob made to Laban was in itself altogether unselfish. As this agreement was only to begin to take effect from the day it was concluded, Jacob proposed to Laban, that he would that very day go through all the flock, and remove all such animals

which in future should become his property, so that it could not be said that he had appropriated to himself a single one that had been born before the agreement had been made. Laban, however, seemingly possessed a mistrustful disposition, and preferred to make the selection himself, and after having singled out all the colored and spotted among the sheep, and all the white and speckled among the goats, he gave them in charge of his own sons, "and set a three days' journey" between the flocks in his son's charge, and the animals left in charge of Jacob, so that there might be no intermingling between the two flocks. Some commentators, and among them Delitzsch, have indeed supposed that the abnormal colored animals now removed were also given to Jacob for his wages, but the context is altogether against this supposition. According to verses 35, 36, Laban himself removed the abnormal coloured animals, and gave them in charge of his own sons, and took the precaution to send them far away. Jacob, who had all his life been tending the flock—for we may reasonably suppose that he did so likewise when at home—must have well known that the percentage of abnormal colored animals was but small, and that he must therefore trust to unforeseen circumstances for remunerative wages. What, then, was his duty on the present occasion? Most assuredly to have put his whole trust in God, who had promised him in the dream at Beth-el that He would be with him, and keep him in all places (ch. xxviii. 19), and left the issue in His hands. But Jacob, in the weakness of human nature, rather had recourse to a device by which he hoped to pervert the ordinary course of nature, and by an artful contrivance produce abnormal colors in the new-born animals. This was certainly taking undue advantage of Laban, who was probably not even aware that such a change could be effected. The scheme which Jacob adopted was, that he took fresh rods of "the poplar" (or storax tree), "and of the hazel, and of the plantain tree" (or according to the Rabbinical writers, "the chestnut tree"), "and peeled white stripes in them," these mottled rods he planted "in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink," and the cattle brought forth "ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted" (vers. 37-39). That such an influence as here spoken of is capable of being exercised seems to be an established fact, and has been frequently noticed, especially among the sheep. The learned Bochart, in his *Hierozyicon* or Scripture Zoology, to which work he devoted many years of his life, has collected many proofs on the subject (i. 618). Compare, also, Jerome in his remarks on our passage: Plin. Hist. Nat. vii. 10; Oppian. Kyneg. l. 1. 327, 353, who adduces several examples from animals.

It is impossible to call in question the testimony of those eminent writers, and of many others both ancient and modern that could be mentioned. Still I have no hesitation in maintaining—and I think most of my readers will agree with me after carefully reading the next chapter—that Jacob's great increase in cattle cannot be solely ascribed to the artifice of the mottled rods, but was brought to pass by the immediate agency of God, who had promised that He would be with him, and who now interposed in his behalf. Jacob himself acknowledged this Divine intervention: "Your father," he says to his wives, "hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God did not suffer him to wrong me" (ch. xxxi. 7). And again, in remonstrating with Laban he says: "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, (*i. e.*, God whom Isaac fears and worships) had been with me, surely thou wouldst now have sent me away empty" (v. 42).

CHAPTER XXXI.

1. *And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's, he hath acquired all this wealth.*

The great increase of Jacob's wealth in cattle, at last aroused the jealousy of Laban's sons, who looked upon that property as belonging to their father. They no doubt were aware of the agreement that had been made, but looked upon the great number of cattle belonging to Jacob as altogether too great a reward for his services. Laban's countenance also assumed a sullen appearance, and very probably his demeanour was no longer as friendly towards him as before (v. 2). But it may well be asked, why did Laban not terminate the contract, at the end of the first year, or second year, when he saw the increase of abnormal animals so vastly in excess from what it used to be? Be it remembered, that there was no stipulation as to the duration of the agreement, and might, therefore, have been terminated by either party at any time.

To find a satisfactory answer to this question, is evidently not an easy matter for those critics who can see nothing but "duplicity, fraud, and cunning," in the patriarch's conduct. Let us hear what Kalisch says, who is most unsparing in his censure upon Jacob's stratagem: "After the first few births of the cattle," he observes, "Laban might indeed have been sur-

prised at the great number of abnormal sheep and goats; but he might attribute it to the interposition of God in favour of Jacob; he might regard it as a hint: how unjust, from an ordinary point of view, the compact was which he had concluded with his son-in-law, and he could not censure Jacob for that which was a silent but powerful rebuke to himself" (p. 548). But why was Laban not equally "surprised at the great number of abnormal sheep and goats," after the "first few births of the cattle"? And why, when he found it entailed a loss to him, did he allow the agreement to go on for six whole years? And even then did not evince any desire on his part to terminate the compact, but Jacob had actually to steal away with his family. The fact of the matter strikes me to be, that Laban after all did not find a material decrease in his flocks, and that it was only after Jacob's flocks had assumed such great proportions that his and his son's jealousy was aroused. We have no desire to shield Jacob from blame in having had recourse to the stratagem of the peeled rods, instead of trusting in the help of God. At the same time, we think it but right to express our firm belief, that the great increase of abnormal sheep and goats was not the result of the stratagem, but was brought about by the will of the Almighty. (Comp. vers. 11, 12.) Although Jacob must have felt greatly hurt at Laban's sons openly accusing him of defrauding their father, and at seeing his father-in-law's feelings changed towards him, still he would probably have continued to serve him for some time longer, had not God in a vision commanded him to return now to his native land (v. 13).

Jacob at the time that he received the command was most likely tending the flocks some considerable distance away from his wives, he therefore sent for them to come to him into the field (v. 4). He was unwilling to take any step without their concurrence, thus proving not only his affection towards them, but also their equality. In addressing his wives he did not merely inform them of his resolve to return to his native country, but fully explained to them the reasons that led him to take that step. He told them what probably they themselves had already perceived, how their father's demeanour had been changed towards him, how he had "changed his wages ten times" (*i. e.* many times), although he had served him with all his "power," but that God did interpose in his behalf, and did not suffer their father to wrong him (vv. 5-10). He also informed them for the first time of a dream he had had at an earlier period (vv. 10-13), and that God had now commanded him to return to his native country. Whatever discord and jealousy existed among the two sisters, were now laid aside, and both only considering their husband's and children's welfare without a

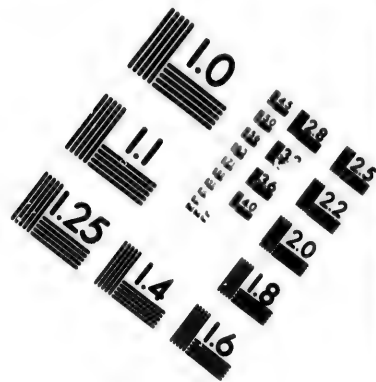
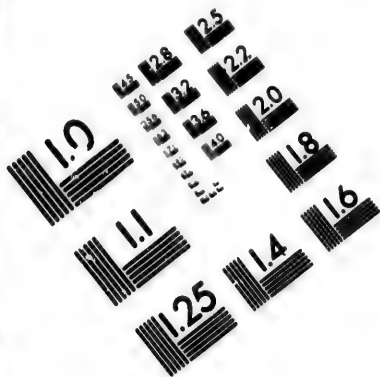
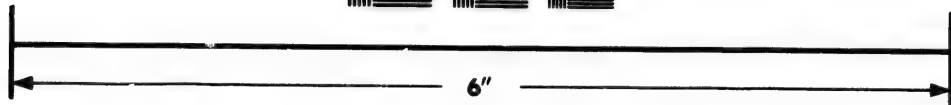
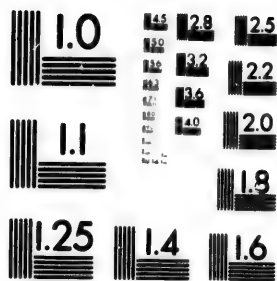


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moment's hesitation answered their husband : "Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house ?" (v. 14.) As much as to say, what can we expect from such a selfish father ? "Are we not counted by him as strangers ? for he hath sold us, and hath also entirely eaten up our money" (v. 15). Instead of having treated us as daughters, he has dealt with us as if we were slaves, by selling us for fourteen years of labour. And this is not all, but "hath also entirely eaten up our money," that is, appropriated to himself all the gain that had accrued from their husbands' fourteen years service, and from the services they had themselves rendered during that period. They therefore not only readily acquiesced in his proposal, but urged him to follow God's direction, "whatever God hath said to thee, do" (v. 16).

19. *And Laban had gone to shear his sheep : and Rachel stole the Teraphim which belonged to her father.*

The circumstance of Laban being from home, must have greatly favoured Jacob's flight, and Rachel seized also the opportunity of carrying away her father's idols. But here arises the question, what were her motives in doing so ? It is a question which has proved very perplexing to commentators, as there is nothing in the narrative that will enable us to speak with any certainty on that point. As might therefore be expected, various conjectures have been advanced, all of which are plausible enough but none positive. Some have supposed that she took them to cure her father of idol-worship. If that were the case, her motive was certainly highly praiseworthy. But why did she not inform her husband of her having taken them ? Or cast them in the Euphrates when they were crossing it ? We fear her object was not of such a praiseworthy nature. Others suppose that she took them, to prevent her father from consulting them as to what route they had taken, and so hinder him from pursuing them. Again, some suppose her motive was to carry them with her, as guardians, to protect them on their journey from evil ; whilst others think, she hoped they would bring prosperity to her household. There are indeed some writers also, who maintain, that Rachel and her sister had not yet altogether relinquished idol-worship, and that it was their desire to practise it also in their new home. This supposition is, however, not reconcilable, with their devout conduct at the birth of their children acknowledging God as the author of their mercies. There are a few writers who conjecture that they merely took the idols for the precious metal of which they were made. Whatever Rachel's real motive may have been, in bringing those idols with her to her new home, certain it is, that they afterwards

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proved productive of mischief in Jacob's family. (See ch. xxxv. 1-3. The teraphim were household idols, apparently varying in size, and very probably also in their form. The one mentioned, 1 Sam. xix. 13, must have been of large size, and had at least the head and face of a human being, for Michal, David's wife, after she had let David down through the window to escape from Saul, who sought to kill him, took a teraphim and laid it in the bed, and told Saul's messengers that David was sick. The teraphim which Rachel took must have been small. These household idols were highly venerated and used as oracles to reveal hidden things, and regarded as bestowers of earthly prosperity, which will explain why Laban was so eager to recover the idols again. Among the later Hebrews they were used by persons who professed the worship of Jehovah, they seemed to have regarded the adoration of the teraphim not so reprehensible as the worshipping of other idols. (Comp. Judg. xvii. xviii.)

Laban did not hear of Jacob's flight until the third day after his departure, but as soon as he heard of it, he took some of his kinsmen with him and went in pursuit of the fugitives, and being outnumbered, overtook them on the seventh day "in the mount Gilead," i. e., the mountainous regions of Gilead. The name Gilead is here used proleptically, for as it will presently be seen it originated afterwards.

24. *And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, Take heed that thou do not speak to Jacob either good or bad.*

Laban having taken with him some of his kinsmen seems to indicate that he was bent upon using violence. The same is also implied, by the warning Laban received in a dream, to take heed not to speak to Laban "either good or evil," which is not a prohibition that Laban was not at all to speak to Jacob, but is a proverbial expression, meaning not to interfere with him, or in any way oppose him. This supernatural admonition had the effect to check Laban's anger, although it did not altogether appease it. He angrily upbraided Jacob for having clandestinely stolen away without giving him an opportunity to kiss his "sons (i. e., his grandsons) and daughters." Son is often used for *grandson*. That had he told him of his wish to leave he would have sent him away "with mirth, and with songs, with timbrel and harp." The language of Laban seems to imply that it was already in his time an established custom to accompany friends when setting out on a long journey with song and music, and apparently the practice still exists in the East. (See Rosenmuller, *Morgenland* i. 55). When the *prefetto* of Egypt was preparing for his journey, he complained of his being incommoded by the song of his friends who in this way took leave

of their relatives and acquaintances. (Harmer's Observations, i. 415). Jacob answered his father-in-law briefly and candidly, that he was afraid to tell him of his desire to return to his father's house, fearing lest he might take his wives from him by force. Thus giving Laban to understand, that his previous conduct towards him had been of such a selfish nature as to convince him that if he saw it was in his interest to detain him longer in his service, he would have gone to the length of detaining his daughters. As to the accusation of having stolen his gods, Jacob at once indignantly repudiated the charge by declaring, that "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee" (v. 32). "Before our brethren," it is, in the presence of the kinsmen whom Laban had brought with him. Jacob was not aware that Rachel had been the offender.

The language of Jacob: "With whomsoever thou findest the gods, let him not live," like the language of Reuben: "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee" (ch. xlii. 37), must not be taken in a literal sense, but must be regarded as being uttered under highly excited feelings. Even if Jacob had been as sure of the innocence of his whole household as he was of his own, it would have been improper to make use of such language, for the punishment would be greatly in excess of the guilt. Laban made a careful search in all the tents, but did not find his teraphim, for Rachel hid them in the litter of the camel, and sat upon them, and when her father came into her tent, she made an excuse that she was unable to rise. "The litter of the camel" is a kind of couch which is fastened on the saddle for the greater comfort of ladies and children performing long journeys. Couches, used for such purposes, were generally made of wicker, this would afford a convenient place for concealing the small idols, and as Rachel pretended to be ill, her sitting or reclining on it aroused no suspicion. Most likely, too, Laban never suspected that his daughter would be guilty of such an impiety as sitting upon his teraphim, and therefore readily accepted the excuse. Jacob naturally felt very greatly aggrieved in being accused of theft, and administered a sharp rebuke to his father-in-law. He demanded of him to point out now in what he had offended against him, since he had carefully searched and found nothing that belonged to him. He reminded him also of the faithful services he had rendered him for twenty years, and the ill-treatment he had received at his hands.

38. *This twenty years I have been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock I have not eaten.*

On account of the careful treatment of the cattle under his

charge, they did not miscarry. As in the East the shepherds are obliged to wander from place to place, often a great distance apart from one another, in search of pasture, a great deal of travelling has to be done, which requires great care and attention on the part of the shepherds.

39. *That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to thee; even I bore the loss of it; at my hand thou didst require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.*

It was customary, if an animal of the flocks was torn by a wild beast, for the shepherd to bring to his master a part of the torn animal as a proof, and having done so, he was no further answerable; but if he neglected to do it, he was obliged to make good the loss. Jacob, in our verse, refers to this custom, which proves its great antiquity. (Compare Exod. xxii. 12, Auth. Vers., v. 13.) Some of the Jewish commentators suppose that the prophet Amos refers to this custom, ch. iii. 12, "as the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear." The Talmud lays down the rule, that the keeper is only answerable for the loss where by ordinary care it might have been prevented. Thus, for example, "animals killed by a fox or marten must be paid for; but animals torn by a wolf, a lion, or bear, or serpent, must not be paid for." (Bab. Kam. 15.) The custom to which Jacob refers was afterwards embodied among the Hindoo laws relating to the duties of shepherds.

40. *Thus I was: in the day the draught consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from my eyes.*

In many parts of the East a very great and sudden change of temperature takes place at sunset. Oppressively hot days are often followed by chilly and even cold nights. From these sudden changes all those that are exposed to the night air suffer very seriously. Most all eastern travellers speak of the great sufferings they have experienced from the intense heat of the day, with very little or no shelter, and from the cold or heavy dew by night. (See Rosenmüller, *Altes und Neues Morgenland*; Morier's *Second Journey*, p. 104, Wellsted, *Arabia*, i. 64.) Indeed, often when a master reproves a servant for being idle, the latter will answer, "What can I do? The heat eats me up by day, and the cold eats me up by night." (Compare also Jer. xxxvi. 30.) "And the sleep departed from my eyes:" the constant care and watchfulness which the flocks required, to guard them against marauders and wild animals by night. He reminds him also, that he had not to thank him for what he now possessed; that he had served fourteen

years for his two daughters, and six years for the cattle which he now has. That during the six years he had no less than ten times changed his wages, and if God had not interposed in his behalf he would have sent him away empty (vv. 41, 42).

43. *And Laban answered and said to Jacob, The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the cattle are my cattle, and all thou seest is mine : and what can I do this day to these my daughters, or to their children whom they have born ?*

Laban evidently felt the force of Jacob's statement, and did not attempt to offer a word in justification of his conduct towards his son-in-law. He now seeks to bring about a reconciliation, but in doing so, he endeavours still to make it appear, that it is due to his generosity if a friendly settlement is arrived at. Rachel and Leah are my daughters, and their children are my grand-children, "and what can I do this day to these," it is, and how should I do any evil to them? He also still persists that Jacob's cattle are his cattle, as if Jacob had not rendered him six years' services for them.

44. *And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou ; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.*

45. *And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.*

Jacob allowed Laban's boasting to pass without taking further notice of it, and at once took a stone and set it up as a memorial, showing by this prompt act, his earnest desire to be on the most friendly terms with his father-in-law, notwithstanding the ill-treatment he had received at his hands.

46. *And Jacob said to his kindred, Gather stones ; and they took stones, and made a heap : and they ate there upon the pile.*

Although there is no mention made in our verse of any sacrifices being offered on the occasion, yet it is most likely Jacob consecrated the heap of stones also by offering sacrifices upon it besides its being used as a table upon which they ate the covenant repast. As the heap of stones was to serve as witness of enduring friendship, Jacob gave it the appropriate name גִּלְעָד (Galed, which is compounded of גָּל (gal) a heap, and דָּ (ed) witness, whilst Laban gave it the Chaldee name יֶגֶר שְׁחָדוּתָא (yegar sahadutha) which is precisely of the same import as the Hebrew name. From Laban bestowing a Chaldee name upon the heap, we gather the information that Chaldee or Aramæan was the language spoken in Abraham's family in Mesopotamia, and that Abraham's family acquired the Hebrew after his immigration into the land of Canaan. Laban called the heap also מִצְפָּה "Mizpah," i. e. watch or watch-place, "for he

said, may the LORD watch between me and thee, when we are hidden (*i. e.* far removed) from one another" (v. 49). In course of time a town sprung up near the place where the heap had been erected, which was also called Mizpah, and which became afterwards celebrated by the sanctuary of God being erected there (see Judg. xi. 11), and also by its having been the dwelling place of Jephthah (see Judg. xi. 34). In verse 29 of the last mentioned chapter, it is called "Mizpeh of Gilead," and many writers regard it to be identical with Ramoth in Gilead (Josh. xxi. 38), and also Ramath-mizpeh, (Josh. xiii. 26).

54. *And Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mountain; and called his kindred to eat bread: and they ate bread, and remained over night on the mountain.*

The offering of sacrifice, and the eating of bread together, was no doubt intended as an additional pledge of mutual friendship.

CHAPTER XXXII.

*1. *And Laban rose early in the morning, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned to his place.*

On account of the great heat during the day, the people in the east rise early and do as much of their work as they possibly can before the intense heat commences, and take shelter from the scorching sun during the hottest part of the day. Those setting out on a journey generally start a little before sunrise, and rest during the heat of the day. Hence we meet so frequently with the expression in the Scriptures "rose early in the morning." We have in our verse another instance of the beautiful custom of the bestowal of a blessing upon those who are about to be separated. All the angry feelings in the heart of Laban were calmed and soothed by the mutual covenant of love, and he now affectionately kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and bestowed the paternal blessing upon them ere he set out to return to his home. The sacred record does not furnish any further account of Laban or of the family of Nahor.

*The reader will please to bear in mind that this verse in the Authorized Version forms the last verse of the preceding chapter.

2. *And Jacob went on his way, and angels of God met him.*

3. *And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is the camp of God : and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.*

After the departure of Laban, Jacob also set out on his journey towards Shechem. Mizpah being the eastern boundary of the promised land, hence, on leaving that place and proceeding in a south-westerly direction, he at once entered the country again which was to become the inheritance of his descendants. Here he was met by an array of the heavenly hosts, and when he saw them he called the name of the place *מַחֲנַיִם* (*Machanayim*) "Mahanaim," i. e., *double camp*. It afterwards belonged to the territory which fell to the lot of the tribe of Gad, and was set apart as one of the Levitical cities. (See Josh. xxi. 38.) The narrative merely states that "angels met him." They apparently delivered no message, and yet the appearance of these heavenly beings to the patriarch could not have been without design. The sight of the angels was evidently intended to recall in a most vivid manner the dream of the ladder and the angels ascending and descending upon it, and the promise he had received that God would be with him and bring him back in peace (ch. xxviii. 15), and at the same time afford him the assurance of God's protection in the long journey he had yet to make before he reached his father's dwelling. Jacob now sent messengers to his brother Esau to the land of Seir, the country of Edom, to inform him of his return from Mesopotamia, that he had been sojourning with Laban the whole time, and that he now possessed oxen, asses, flocks, men-servants, and women-servants. He further charged the messengers to tell him that he had sent them that he might find grace in his eyes. The language which Jacob employed in the message, "Thy servant Jacob," "Tell my lord," (v. 5, 6), was calculated to appease Esau as it breathed humility, which the great chieftain—for such he had now become—would interpret as an inferior humbly seeking a reconciliation with a superior.

7. *And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau ; and he cometh also to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.*

From our verse it appears that Esau made no reply to the message, but immediately on receiving it collected four hundred men together and set out to meet his brother. Now was this intended as a hostile demonstration, or merely as a display of his greatness and power? Jacob evidently looked upon it in the former light, for he was "greatly afraid and distressed" and divided his people and flocks and herds into two camps, so that

if Esau was to smite one camp the other might escape (vv. 8, 9). This was a precaution which was generally adopted when a sudden attack was expected. But from the affectionate manner in which Esau met his brother he "ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept" (ch. xlii. 4), it is more likely that the escort of four hundred men he took with him was intended as a display of his greatness. Jacob in his message had stated that he had oxen, asses, flocks, men-servants, and women-servants, and Esau wished to show by the large escort what a great chieftain he had become. Some writers have supposed that Esau on hearing of his brother's return, was suddenly seized with a desire for revenge, and that he did actually set out with hostile intentions, but on seeing his brother after such a long absence, his ill-feelings suddenly gave place to brotherly affection. Such may indeed have been the case, still, we think, that had his intentions been inimical, he would have rather kept his movements secret, in order that he might have fallen upon his brother unawares. Jacob after having made all precautionary arrangements in case of a hostile attack, offered up a devout prayer for God's assistance in this emergency. In this petition he first pleads the Divine promise, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac! O Lord who saidst unto me, Return to thy country, and to thy birth-place, and I will do well with thee." (v. 10.) Then he urges his own utter helplessness and unworthiness, "I am too little for all Thy mercies, and for all Thy truth which Thou hast shown to Thy servant" (v. 11); and that although unworthy to receive any mercy at God's hands, He would yet deliver him now from the hand of his brother, of whom he stood in fear, lest he would come and smite him,* "the mother with the children" (v. 12). And, lastly, he pleads the covenant promise which is still unaccomplished, "And Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude" (v. 13); as much as to say, if I, the mother and children, are slain, how is the covenant promise to be fulfilled? But although Jacob had, in his fervent petition, placed himself entirely under the merciful protection of the Almighty, yet he did not neglect, at the same time, to use all means in his power to appease his brother. The plan which he adopted was one which most likely would lead to a favorable result. He selected "from that which came to his hand" (v. 14), *i. e., from that which he had acquired*, 550 head of

* The phrase **הַמִּתָּה עַל בְּנֵיהֶם** (*hiccāh em albanim*) "smite the mother with the children," is a proverbial expression, indicating the total destruction of a family, or of a community regarded as forming one large family. (See Hos. x. 14.)

cattle, namely, "Two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats, with two hundred ewes, and twenty rams. Thirty milch camels their young, forty cows, and ten bulls, twenty she-asses, and ten foals" (vv 15, 16). The proportion of the male and female animals is said to be in accordance with agricultural rule. (See Varro De Re Rustica, ii. 3.) The milk of camels, on account of its refreshing and wholesome qualities, is highly esteemed, hence the milch-camels would be especially acceptable. The means taken by Jacob to reconcile his brother by a munificent present does not imply a doubt on the part of the patriarch as to the success of his prayer, as some writers have erroneously interpreted it, for, as it has been well said, "when we pray, we are not to expect to be answered by a miracle. God usually works by means, and when we ask for guidance and deliverance, the method by which we generally receive it, is through the intervention of our own mind, acted upon, no doubt, although we cannot tell in what manner or to what extent, by the operation of the spirit of God."

Jacob did not send all the animals in one drove, but divided them, according to their species, in separate droves, in charge of different servants, whom he instructed to allow a space to intervene between each drove, and what to say when they met his brother. Jacob may have had several reasons for adopting this plan. In the first place, to make the present appear more considerable as one drove after another would come up. In the second place, by hearing the same humble message repeated, "*They are thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent to my lord Esau; and, behold, he is also behind us*" (v. 19), it would more likely have the effect to assuage his brother's anger if he cherished any. And thirdly, it gave the others an opportunity to escape in case the first drove was attacked. Jacob made the servants also say that he himself was following them, in order to show Esau that he came to meet him without any apprehension of receiving harm at his hands. After the servants with the present had passed over the river Jabbok Jacob himself with his wives, and children, and his flocks followed later in the night (22, 23, 24). On account of the great heat during the day in Palestine, travelling by night is by no means an uncommon thing. Jacob apparently re-crossed the river, probably to see whether nothing had been left behind, and whilst there alone "a man wrestled with him until the rising of the morning dawn" (v. 25). Now although the person who wrestled with Jacob is here termed אִישׁ (*ish*) "a man," yet it is evident from the sequel of the narrative, as we shall presently point out, that it was God Himself in the form of a man. Hosea, who refers to the incident, calls the Being an angel. "Yea, he had power over the angel and prevailed"

(ch. xii. 4.) The "angel" was not a created being, but the Angel of God, the visible manifestation of Jehovah. Hence the change of name from יעקב "*Jacob*," a supplanter, to יִשְׂרָאֵל "*Israel*," *God's fighter*, i. e., *fighter with God*, or as some interpret the name, *a warrior of God*. The narrative itself assigns the reason for the change of name, "for שָׂרִיתָ (*saritha*) thou hast fought with God and with men and hast prevailed" (v. 29). And hence, also, Jacob called the name of the place where the conflict took place פְּנִיֵּאל (*Peniël*) Peniel, i. e., *face of God*, "for, *said he*, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (v. 31). These passages remove all doubt as to who the אִישׁ (*ish*) "man" was that struggled with Jacob.

26. *And when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was brought out of joint as He wrestled with him.*

The eminent writer, Henry Kurz, remarks on this passage, "Jacob's conduct had hitherto been marked by falsehood and deceit, by artifice and guilt, by self-will and self-reliance, as he employed these unholy means in fulfilling divine purpose, he profaned the holy ways of God, and seemed to involve God in the dishonor resulting from the arts which he practised. These causes which exercised a disturbing influence on the covenant between God and Jacob were abundantly sufficient to provoke the wrath of God against the offender. Until this divine wrath was appeased or subdued, Jacob could not trust to the protection of God against Esau or enter the land that had been promised to him. Hence the Lord Himself appears here as his enemy; Jacob resorts at first to the same weapons with which he had hitherto contended against God—he employs carnal weapons of his own natural strength. But when his own strength abandons him he seizes the true spiritual weapons, prayers and supplications—"he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angels, and prevailed; *he wept and made supplication unto Him.*" Hosea xii. 3, 4; by these he subdues the wrath of God and receives a divine blessing." The name Jacob *supplanter*, expressing his former sinful conduct, is now changed to the honorable one *Israel God's fighter*, or *warrior of God*, which was also transmitted to his descendants as the covenant nation, and hence the term "children of Israel" is almost invariably used to denote the chosen people of God. Lest Jacob should attribute his success to his own strength, God "touched the hollow of his thigh" so that it was put out of joint, and rendered him lame. The dislocation of the thigh

*יִשְׂרָאֵל from שָׂרָה (*sarah*) to fight and אֵל (*El*) God.

was thus affected by a mere touch which otherwise requires the application of extraordinary strength, and is of very rare occurrence. Jacob was now no longer able to continue the struggle, but he tenaciously retained his grasp upon the angel until he received from him a blessing. "I will not let thee go until thou bless me (v. 27). Jacob's wrestling with God as set forth in the sacred narrative, teaches the highly important lesson that God will not deny any blessing to persevering prayer.

33. *Therefore the children of Israel do not eat of the sinew of the hip, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, to this day; because He touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip.*

As God had touched "the sinew of the hip" it was considered as holy, and the Israelites did therefore abstain from eating it. This custom appears from our verse to have been observed in the time of Moses, but has not been enjoined as a law among the dietary precepts of the Pentateuch. The Talmud, however, contains a number of precepts regarding the observance of the custom. (See Treatise חולין *Chulin*, ch. vii.) The custom is at present still strictly observed among the orthodox Israelites, and as they are not sure what sinew it was, or even which thigh it was, they regard it as necessary to abstain from using both hind-quarters. The ביד חגשזה (*gid haggashek*) is the *nervus ishiadicus*, the thickest of all sinews, beginning in the thigh and going through the leg to the ankle, the impairing of it necessarily causes lameness. It is truly surprising that notwithstanding the direct statement that Jacob's thigh was dislocated, which caused perpetual lameness, so many of our modern critics will persist in maintaining that the occurrence of Jacob's wrestling with God was *merely a dream*. This hypothesis is too extravagant even for some of the most pronounced rationalistic writers to adopt. The river Jabbok evidently received its name in commemoration of Jacob's wrestling there with the angel. Its Hebrew name is יַבֶּק (*Yabbok*), and the verb employed in the original for "restled" (v. 25) is יָאָבַק (*yeävek*). The name יַבֶּק (*yab-bok*) is no doubt a contracted form of the verb יָאָבַק *yeävek*. The natives call the river now *Wady Serka*, i. e., the blue river.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1. *And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children to Leah, and to Rachel, and to the two handmaids.*

2. *And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.*

As Jacob continued the journey and looking in the direction where he expected his brother would come, he saw him now approaching accompanied by four hundred men. When the messengers whom he had sent brought him word of his brother coming to meet him with four hundred men," the reader will remember, "Jacob was greatly afraid and dispirited" (ch. xxviii. 8), but now the sight of his brother, with his large band of armed men, inspired him with no apprehension of evil. He had wrestled with God and prevailed, and this gave him assurance that he would also prevail with man (ch. xxxii. 29). Yet although Jacob felt now strengthened by faith, he still considered it his duty to take all precautions against any exigency, and thus we find him make such a disposition of his family, as the most consummate prudence could devise. In this disposition of his family he seemed to be altogether guided by the dictates of his affections, at least, we can see no other motive for placing the handmaids and their children first, then Leah with her children, and after them Rachel and Joseph, placing those dearest to him in a less exposed position.

3. *And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near his brother.*

Jacob himself went fearlessly at the head of the caravan to meet his brother, and as he advanced he bowed seven times. We have already stated, as the number seven was, among the Hebrews, regarded as a sacred number, it is frequently employed to express an *indefinite number*. We need not therefore suppose that Jacob bowed just seven times, but as he was advancing he stood still at intervals and made a low bow, and this he did until he came near his brother. The expression יִשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרֶצָה (*yishtachu artsa*), "bowed himself to the ground," employed in our verse, denotes a *low bow*, such as is made by the Orientals, by which they bring the head near to the ground, but do not touch it. It differs therefore from אָפַיִם אֶרֶצָה (*appayim artsa*), *the face to the ground* (ch. xix. 11), which means a *complete prostration*. Jacob did not for a moment doubt that God would protect him, if his brother had any evil designs against

him, but he is desirous to use all possible means to conciliate his brother. It was merely as a mark of profound respect, hoping by this humble demeanor, to arouse a kindly feeling in his brother's heart.

4. *And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.*

It is impossible to conceive a more affectionate reception than that which Esau according to our verse accorded to Jacob. Whatever ill-feelings may have lingered in Esau's breast, they vanished as if by magic force at the sight of his brother, from whom he had now been twenty years separated. The conduct of Esau on this occasion cannot help but to enlist our warmest admiration. He does not wait until his brother, who had so greatly wronged him, comes up to him, but runs to meet him, and falls on his neck and kisses him, showing thereby his great delight at seeing him again, and that all that had passed was now forgotten. The Hebrew student will have observed that the letters in the word וַיִּשָּׂקֶהוּ (*waiyishshakehu*) "and he kissed him" are marked with *puncta extraordinaria*, the Masorites seemed to have doubted whether Esau's kiss was genuine, or whether he was capable of sincere affection. (See Bereshith Rabba on our verse). The Rabbis however had not the slightest ground for doubting the sincerity of Jacob's affection, his subsequent conduct showed that his emotions were genuine. When Esau saw the women and children he inquired "Who are these with thee," to which Jacob replied they are "the children whom God had graciously given to thy servant" (v. 5). After this the mothers with their children passed by in the order in which Jacob had arranged them and reverentially bowed (vv. 6, 7). Esau next inquired about the drove of cattle which he had met, to which Jacob replied that they were intended as a present, but Esau politely refused to accept them saying, "I have much, my brother; keep that which thou hast to thyself." (v. 9).

10. *And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy eyes, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore I have seen thy face, as one sees the face of God, and thou hast been gracious to me.*

The refusal of a present or the returning of a gift according to eastern custom, is a sign that the friendship of the giver is not desired, or that his request will not be granted. Jacob, therefore, although his brother had expressed a very good reason for not accepting the present, being himself rich, yet persisted in pressing it upon him as a proof of a complete recon-

ciliation. "I pray thee, receive my present at my hand." The meaning of the statement in the latter part of the verse, "for therefore* I have seen thy face as one seeth the face of God," is not very clear, and consequently various explanations have been given of it. But the meaning which the language seems most readily to suggest appears to be, that in the kind reception his brother had given him he discerned *heavenly friendliness*; he looked upon it as a token of the divine favor towards him. Jacob recognized in the change of his brother's disposition towards him, the constraining power of the Almighty, and could therefore well say, "I have seen thy face, as one seeth the face of God."

11. *Take, I pray thee, my blessing which is brought to thee; because God hath been merciful to me, and because I have every thing. And he urged him, and he took it.*

"Take, I pray thee, my blessing," i. e., take my gift. From *ברכה* (*berachah*), *blessing*, being here used in the sense of *gift* no doubt originated afterwards the usage of denominating a *gift* a *blessing*. Thus Abigail, the wife of Nabal, in presenting a present which she brought to David, said: "And now *חברכה* (*habberacha*) this blessing (i. e., the gift) which thy handmaid has brought unto my lord, let it even be given to the young men that walk at the feet of my lord" (i. e., that follow my lord). (1 Sam xxv. 27.) See also 2 Kings v. 15. As the presenting of a present was usually accompanied by expressions of *good wishes*, hence the term *blessing* itself was used for a *gift*. I believe that in middle ages certain gifts were called "*benedictiones*."

Esau, although aware that his brother with his children and number of cattle would not be able to travel as quickly as himself, who was not so encumbered, yet in order to give still further proof of his good will and sincerity of reconciliation, he offered to accompany him and his family as a protection through a region with which he had become familiar; but Jacob politely declined the offer on the ground that "the children are tender and the herds young," and require great care and precaution that they may not be over driven. He begged his brother not to delay his return home on his account, but that he would follow him in his usual slow pace, and visit him in his home at Mount Seir. Whether Jacob ever carried out his intention of visiting his brother at his home the narrative does not inform us. Esau, being well acquainted with the country that his brother had to travel through, and the danger that he may have

* *כִּי עַל כֵּן רָאִיתִי* "for therefore I have seen." may be rendered "because I have seen."

to encounter from marauding Bedouins, offered next to leave at least some of his men with him as an escort; but Jacob, trusting in the promise of the LORD that He would guard him and bring him back to his native country, declined this kind offer also with the remark, "Wherefore this, may I *only* find grace in the eyes of my lord"—as much as to say, what need is there for putting you to this unnecessary trouble; all I desire is, that I may find grace in your sight. It is strange that our modern adverse critics are always ready to put an unfavourable construction upon the language and actions of Jacob, even where there is not the slightest ground for doing so. Jacob's polite refusal of his brother's company in the journey is ascribed to mistrust of his sincerity. Thus Dr. Kalisch, who echoes the views of other writers of this class, remarks: "Does not again a spirit of suspicion and reserve overshadow the mind of Jacob? Is he incapable of rising to the natural purity of his disinterested brother? Or does his keen intellect teach him how imprudent it would be unguardedly to rely upon the falacious calmness of a passionate mind?" There is nothing in Jacob's language which would justify such a construction being put upon it. His refusal was solely upon the ground of not wishing to put his brother to unnecessary trouble and inconvenience, and, therefore, so far from being blameable, it was highly commendable. No proper minded person will subject a friend to unnecessary trouble.

16. *And Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.*

17. *And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built a house for himself, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.*

The same day that Esau had proposed to his brother to travel in company together, and his kind offer having been politely declined, he took leave of his brother to return to his adopted country. Jacob also set out on his journey, probably with the intention to proceed immediately to Shechem, but for some reason or other which the narrative does not record, when he arrived in the neighborhood of the river Jordan he made a halt there, "and built a house for himself, and made booths for his cattle." This seems to imply that he intended at least to remain there for some time, whether he did so or not is uncertain. Some commentators indeed suppose that the "house" was nothing more than a *tent*; now, whilst no doubt the term *בֵּית* (*bayith*) *house* is also sometimes applied to a *tent*, yet the verb *בָּנָה* (*banah*) *to build* would hardly be used in connection with the *pitching of a tent*. The erecting of huts for the cattle also indicates that he intended to remain in the place for some

time. From the circumstance of Jacob having erected "booths" in the place, it obtained the name סְכּוּתָה (Succoth) *i.e.* booths. It was situated east of Jordan, between the brook Jabbok and Jordan. The city which afterwards sprang up on this spot was by Joshua assigned to the tribe of Gad. When Gideon pursued the Midianites, he asked the inhabitants of the town to give to his followers who were faint some bread, but they treated him with disdain. For this cruel conduct he vowed that after God had delivered his enemies into his hands he would tear the flesh of the elders of the place with thorns and briars, and he did so after having defeated the Midianites. (See Judg. viii. 4-16.)

18. *And Jacob came in safety to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Podan-aram; and he pitched his tents before the city.*

Jacob, on leaving Succoth, crossed the river Jordan, and like his grandfather Abraham, when he first entered the promised land, repaired to Shechem. In the Authorized Version, following the Septuagint and Vulgate Versions, שֵׁלֶם (*Shalem*) is taken as a proper name, Salem or Jerusalem, like ch. xiv. 18; but it is not easily seen how Jerusalem could be called "the city of Shechem." The word שֵׁלֶם (*shalem*) is evidently to be taken here as an adjective *in peace* or *in safety*, equivalent to בְּשָׁלוֹם (*beshalom*) "in peace," ch. xxviii. 21, when Jacob vowed: "And I return again to my father's house in peace," and to which no doubt reference is here made, to show that what Jacob then asked at Beth-el was now literally fulfilled, that he had now returned in safety to his native country. Shechem was founded by Hamor, a Hivite prince, who called it after his son *Shechem*, hence here spoken of as "the city of Shechem." It is situated in the very centre of Palestine. At Shechem, Jacob bought the piece of the field upon which he encamped from the children of Hamor for a hundred kesitahs. The precise value of the קְסִיטָה (*kesitah*) is impossible now to determine. According to the ancient versions it was a piece of silver of the value of a lamb. Some of the Rabbinic commentators render the word by "lamb," and explain that it was a coin or piece of silver bearing the figure of a lamb. And Münster thought he had discovered the *kesitah* in a coin of Cyprus, which bore the figure of a lamb. The ancient Athenians had a coin called *βοῦς* (*ox*), because it bore the image of that animal. According to Job xlii. 11, all Job's brothers and sisters and his former acquaintances came to him, and every one gave him a kesitah and a ring of gold. The kesitah being mentioned in connection with a ring of gold, would indicate that it was a piece of silver or gold of some

value. Upon the piece of land which Jacob bought he erected an altar, and called it *אל אלהי ישראל* (*El Elohe Yisrael*) i. e. *God, the God of Israel, or the omnipotent God of Israel*. When Abraham immigrated into the land of Canaan it was at Shechem where he built the first altar in commemoration of God having there appeared to him, and gave him the promise that his seed should inherit the land (ch. xii. 7); his grandson now built an altar here in commemoration of God's merciful dealing with him whilst a fugitive in a foreign country. He had left his native land with nothing but the staff in his hand, a fugitive from the wrath of his brother; he now returns to it, reconciled with his brother, with a large family of children, numerous servants, and a large possession of cattle. The building of an altar implies also the offering up of sacrifice and prayer, or what constituted at that time public worship.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1. *And Dinah, the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.*

2. *And Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country saw her, and he took her, and lay with her, and humbled her.*

We have here at the outset to combat the arguments adduced by infidel and rationalistic writers endeavouring to show the improbability of the account contained in this chapter. They maintain that Dinah at that time could not have been more than from five to seven years old, inasmuch as Jacob obtained Leah to wife after the first seven years service, that Dinah was the seventh child of Leah, and the whole time that Jacob served Laban was only twenty years. This is all quite true, but those writers have quite forgotten to take into account the time that Jacob may have dwelled at Succoth, and the time he may have sojourned at Shechem, before the event took place. At Succoth he built a house for himself and booths for his cattle, which certainly implies a stay for some length of time, and he may have dwelled several years at Shechem before the event took place. Supposing then that Dinah was six or seven years old when Jacob left Laban, and that he had sojourned at Succoth and at Shechem seven or eight years—we have no means of obtaining the precise time—this would give Dinah an age of fourteen or fifteen years when the event took place. In support of this statement we may also remark that Joseph and Dinah

were about of the same age, and that the former was sold into Egypt when seventeen years old (ch. xxxvii. 2). Now if we place the event recorded in our chapter two years before the selling of Joseph by his brethren, Dinah would at that time have been *fifteen years old*. And be it remembered that all that transpired between the event recorded in our chapter and the selling of Joseph may have easily taken place in the two intervening years. But supposing Dinah had only been thirteen or fourteen years old, it would not have been an extraordinary thing for Shechem asking her for wife, for marriages at the age of twelve to fourteen are by no means uncommon in the East even at the present time. Nay more, travellers of unquestionable authority mention instances of girls having been married at the age of ten years. Niebuhr, in his account of Arabia, says: "I knew a man whose wife was no more than ten years old when the marriage was consummated." Dr. Shaw, in his *Travels and Observations*, also mentions that "It sometimes happens that a girl is a mother at the age of eleven, and a grandmother at two-and-twenty." Indeed, it is universally admitted that Oriental women attain the full charm of their beauty about the age of fourteen or fifteen. From the above remarks, the unbiased reader will now perceive that the opponents of Scripture have altogether taken a one-sided view of the subject. In the case of Dinah, no supernatural protection was vouchsafed as was to Sarah and Rebekah, for Dinah deliberately and in a careless manner, put herself in the way of being seen by the prince of the place. Nay more, her visiting the daughters of the land, was no doubt in direct opposition to the wishes of her father, who we may rest assured continually impressed upon his household the necessity of a perfect separation from the idolatrous people. Those who deliberately expose themselves to danger, need not expect a miracle in their behalf to shield them from evil results. Josephus, in speaking of the occurrence, says, "Now as the Shechemites were keeping a festival, Dinah, who was the only daughter of Jacob, went into the city to see the finery of the women of the country" (Ant. ch. xxi. par. 1); but the expression, "went out to see the daughters of the land," rather implies that she had entered into a friendly intercourse with the daughters of the land, and made a practice of visiting them. The ardent affection which Shechem entertained for Dinah was more likely, too, of gradual growth, having often seen and met with her, than a suddenly conceived passion.

When Jacob heard what had taken place, "he held his peace" (v. 5), that is, he took no steps in the matter, for his sons were in the field tending the flocks, and it was the duty of the brothers to avenge the dishonour of a sister. Before the

brothers, however, returned home—for they may have been tending the flocks at some distance away from home—Shechem begged his father to obtain Dinah to wife for him, and Hamor went to Jacob to obtain his consent. It appears from verses 11, 12, that Shechem accompanied his father in order to add his entreaties, "Ask of me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give you according as you will say to me: but give me the damsel to wife." Shechem had allowed himself to become a victim to his passion, but his subsequent conduct was honorable, and showed that he was willing to make any honorable reparation in his power, and that his ardent affection for Dinah was sincere. Whilst Hamor was yet speaking to Jacob, the sons returned from the field, and when they heard what had occurred, "they were very wrath, because he had wrought folly in Israel." This is the first time that the family of Jacob is designated by the distinguished name "Israel" which afterwards was applied to Jacob's posterity when they became a nation. The phrase "wrought folly in Israel" is in the Scriptures sometimes used in reference to the commission of a disgraceful sin. (compare Deut. xxii. 21; Judg. xx. 10; Jer. xxix. 23). Jacob could never consent to a union of his daughter with a Canaanite, and there was no alternative but to reject the very considerable worldly advantages offered by Hamor and his son. But what was under the circumstances to be done? The mere rejecting of the proposal would have left the guilty party unpunished for the hideous crime he had committed; and Jacob who was a mere sojourner in the country was powerless to inflict a punishment upon the son of the prince of the land; and be it also remembered, that Shechem had still detained Dinah at his house. (v. 26). It is quite proper that we bear all this in mind when passing judgment upon the atrocious acts of Jacob's son, which we shall immediately have to notice. Had Jacob not allowed his sons to take such a prominent part in the transaction, an amicable settlement might possibly have been arrived at. Certain it is the dreadful slaughter of the innocent citizens of Shechem would have been averted. Though brothers were considered the guardians of their sisters, they had no right to disregard the counsel or wishes of their father, or supercede his authority. Jacob's sons, however, took the matter altogether out of their father's hands, they answered Shechem and his father deceitfully (v. 13), and concocted a plan by which they hoped successfully to carry out their wicked design. They proposed to Shechem and Hamor that they and all the males of Shechem should become circumcised: that it was only upon that condition they could consent to contract intermarriage with them. The proposal can only be characterized as

the vilest hypocrisy. They knew very well that circumcision would still leave them Canaanites and idolators. We have already shown that circumcision was, at a later time, also adopted by heathen people. Circumcision alone would, therefore, not have brought them any nearer to God than they were before. But besides that, it was also an act of gross profanity in making use of the sacred sign of the covenant as a means to carry out their atrocious design. Hamor and his son accepted the proposal, and by their influence and promise of worldly gain and advantages—"Will not their cattle and their property and all their beasts be ours (v. 23)?"—they obtained also the compliance of the citizens of Shechem to their proposal. The cunning and cruel plot had so far proved successful, and there was now nothing more to do than to await for the opportune time to arrive, which would enable Jacob's sons, without any risk of failure to accomplish their horrible design. Accordingly on the third day, when the Shechemites were in an extremely weak state and suffering great pain, Simeon and Levi, full brothers of Dinah—and most likely accompanied by their servants—with their swords in their hands, fell upon the city and slew Hamor and his son and all the males, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house (vv. 25, 26). It will thus be seen, that although according to verse 13, all the sons of Jacob took part in making the proposal to Hamor and his son, only Simeon and Levi carried out the massacre. The narrative affords no information why the other sons of Jacob took no part in the carnage, but we may reasonably infer from their taking part in the plundering of the city (v. 27), that during the several days' interval between their treating with Hamor and his son, and the day when the massacre took place, they considered the matter over, and in calmer moments came to the conclusion, that the slaughter of the Shechemites was not justifiable, though they were no doubt unanimous in taking vengeance on the defiler of their sister. Some writers have indeed supposed, that although only Simeon and Levi are mentioned, yet the other brothers also took part in the slaughter. But why should just these two be mentioned? Dinah had other full brothers. Besides, it is clear from Jacob's prophetic declarations upon his death-bed concerning Simeon and Levi (chapter xlix. 5-7), where he denounces in severest terms their merciless slaughter of the Shechemites, that only these two of his sons were actually engaged in the atrocious bloodshed:

"Simeon and Levi are brethren;
Instruments of violence are their swords;"

exclaimed the dying patriarch, that is, they not only are children of the same mother, but likewise possess the same wicked

character and disposition. This they evinced in their being associated in the treacherous murder of the Shechemites.

"In their counsel enter not my soul ;
In their assembly do not join, my heart ;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their wantonness they laughed an ox.
Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,
And their wrath, for it was cruel ;
I will disperse them in Jacob,
I will scatter them in Israel."

This passage will hereafter be more fully explained, and the deviation of the rendering in the English version noticed, we shall only here remark that the term "ox" is here employed figuratively to denote a *man* of distinction, and refers to Hamor, the prince of the country, or Shechem his son. Many commentators, indeed, take the nouns (*ish*) "a man," and (*shor*) "an ox" collectively, and explain the first noun as referring to the citizens of Shechem, and the latter noun as referring to Shechem, his son and other dignitaries of the place. But whilst only Simeon and Levi were the perpetrators of the slaughter, it is clear from the narrative that the other sons took part in the spoiling of the population, "The sons of Israel came upon the slain, and spoiled the city" (v. 27).

30. *And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to bring me into ill-odour among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I am few in number, and they will gather themselves against me, and will slay me, and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.*

From the mild reproof contained in our verse one would be apt to infer that the only reason for Jacob's disapprobation of the cruel, rapacious, and perfidious acts of his two sons, was a fear of a terrible revenge at the hands of the powerful Canaanites and Perizzites, and that the immoral and wicked aspect of the deed was altogether left out of consideration. It will, however, be seen from the unmeasured terms with which he denounced the acts of his two sons in the last moments of his life, that the pain and sorrow they caused him must indeed have been great, and he regarded their acts of such horrible nature as deserving of severe and lasting punishment;

"I will disperse them in Jacob,
I will scatter them in Israel;"

that is, I predict they shall surely be dispersed; a homeless dispersion shall be their dreary lot. And this prophecy of Jacob regarding Simeon and Levi was indeed literally fulfilled as we shall hereafter show. Jacob, in reproving Simeon and

Levi, probably represented to them here only the imminent danger of destruction, in which their actions have placed his whole family, as being most likely to arouse them from their guilty apathy, and make them feel the enormity of their crime. Hardened sinners as they must have been, yet they would not be so utterly devoid of all human feeling as to view with heartless indifference the imminent danger in which they had plunged their whole family. The answer they made to their father's reproof, "should he deal with our sister as with a harlot" (v. 31)? would indeed have been a satisfactory one, had they inflicted a deserved punishment upon Shechem alone, but why destroy the innocent citizens who had no part in the crime? It is human nature to keep even little misdoings in a family from obtaining publicity, or if such be not possible, to make them at least appear as insignificant as can be. Moses, however, though of the tribe of Levi, does in no way endeavour to spare the character of his progenitor, but narrates his atrocious acts with all the simplicity of truth. This affords another striking proof of the veracity of the sacred narrative.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1. *And God said to Jacob, Rise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there; and make there an altar to God, that appeared unto thee when thou fledst from the face of Esau thy brother.*

After the occurrence narrated in the preceding chapter, there was now no longer any safety for Jacob to remain in the neighbourhood of Shechem. The Canaanites would certainly have avenged the slaughter of their countrymen. The distressed patriarch was no doubt greatly perplexed to know what was best to do under the harrowing circumstances, but God had promised to be with him and protect him wherever he went, and now when all human wisdom and power failed to avert the impending danger, He appeared to him and directed him what to do. God by His almighty power might have shielded him from harm, but this would have involved the performance of a miracle, and miracles as we have already shown, were never resorted to as long as the desired object could be obtained otherwise. God directed him to remove to Beth-el situated about thirty miles south of Shechem, and there build the altar in accordance with the vow which he had made when on his way to Mesopotamia (ch. xxii. 20-22.)

2. *And Jacob said to his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods which are among you, and be clean and change your garments.*

Before removing to the sacred spot which he had declared to be "none other than the house of God," and "the gate of heaven" (xxviii. 17), he commanded his household to put away אֱלֹהֵי הַנָּכַר (*elohe hannechar*) "the strange gods" or as it may be rendered "the gods of the stranger," i. e., those worshipped by foreign people. By "the strange gods" is evidently more meant than merely the Teraphim which Rachel had brought with her, for we have seen that those were always spoken of by that designation. The use of the term "strange Gods," would imply that other idols had found their way into the patriarch's household either by some of the servants which he had acquired in Mesopotamia, who were heathens, or among the spoils which had been taken at Shechem, or had been brought in by those who had been captured. Jacob was determined that everything savouring idolatry was to be entirely done away with, there was hereafter to be an exclusive acknowledgment of his God. They were also commanded to cleanse themselves and change their garments, to impress them more forcibly with the offensive nature of idolatry.

4. *And they gave Jacob all the strange gods that were in their hands, and their ear-rings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.*

It must have been highly gratifying to the patriarch to see his command so willingly obeyed. Idols of any kind are not always readily relinquished. But why the ear-rings which were in their ears? By these are evidently only meant such as were used as amulets, upon which were often engraved allegorical figures. They were believed to possess supernatural powers to avert evil and protect from harm. These amulets seem to have always been in common use in the East; they are mentioned by the prophet Isaiah among the objects which ensnared the faith of the Hebrews (Is. iii. 20); they were even for a long time used among the early Christians. "And Jacob hid them under the oak which was in Shechem"; the use of the article, "the oak," seems to imply that reference is made to a particular and well known tree, and is most probably the same oak which was afterwards called אֵלֶּון מְסֻכִּים (*elon meonenim*), the oak of the sorcerers (Judg. xi. 37). But it may be asked, why hide them, and why just under this tree? It appears from Jacob's action of hiding the idols instead of melting them, and making use of the silver and gold, that

already in the patriarchal times, even the metals of which the idols were formed were regarded as an abomination. Under the Mosaic laws it was directly prohibited to appropriate to one's use the silver or gold of idols. "The graven images of their gods, shall ye burn with fire, thou shalt not covet the silver or gold that is in them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein : for it is an abomination to the LORD" (Deut. vii. 25). Then as regards the hiding of the idols under this particular tree. Jacob no doubt selected this spot as affording the safest hiding place, since the oak was among the Canaanites dedicated to religious purposes, and anything buried under it would not likely be discovered.

5. *And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round them, they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.*

The expression *חַתַּת אֱלֹהִים* (*chittath Elohim*), "the terror of God," may either mean a terror which God had sent upon the people in order to protect Jacob and his family, or, according to a Hebrew idiom, which we have already explained, it may mean "a mighty terror" seized the people around them. The former rendering is more suitable to the context, for if the latter rendering is adopted, "the terror" must still be regarded to have been a supernatural one. When Jacob arrived at Beth-el he built there an altar, and called it *אֵל בֵּית אֵל* (*El-Beth-El*), "El-beth-el," i.e. God of Beth-el. Jacob had already called the place Beth-el, but now, in order to impart more sanctity to the place, he added the appellation "*El*" God to it, so that the literal rendering of the place now would be "God of the house of God."

8. *And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and its name was called Allon-bachuth (Oak of Weeping.)*

The mentioning of the death and burial of Rebekah's nurse here naturally leads one to suppose that she was at the time with Jacob. But the narrative nowhere informs us how and when she got into his household. Some writers, therefore, suppose that her death had taken place some time before, but is only now mentioned, as no appropriate place had offered itself previously. They conjecture that Isaac, during Jacob's twenty years absence, may, in the course of his wandering in the land, have come to Beth-el, and whilst there the death of the nurse took place. But it certainly would be very strange, and quite unaccountable, that if Deborah had died whilst with the family of Isaac, that her death should be mentioned, and that of her mistress passed over unnoticed. It is therefore more likely

that Deborah had been sent to Jacob during his protracted stay at Succoth. The mentioning of the nurse's death after Jacob's removal to Beth-el would then be chronologically correct. Jacob would naturally be greatly affected by the death of his mother's faithful and aged nurse, who must now have been upwards of a hundred and fifty years old, most of which were spent in her service, and pay to her memory all the respect that he could; he not only wept over her grave, but called the tree, which marked her resting place, "Ellon-bachuth," *i. e. the Oak of Weeping.*

9. *And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.*

God had appeared to Jacob at this place when he was on his way to Padan-aram, and now he appeared again to him on his return, and renewed to him all the promises which He had previously made to him and to his ancestors. In commemoration of this manifestation, the patriarch "set up a pillar" and consecrated it by pouring wine and oil upon it, and called it also Beth-el (vv. 14, 15).

Jacob set out on his journey again, and when he arrived in the neighbourhood of Ephrath, which is Bethlehem (comp. v. 19), an event took place which was the cause of both great joy and grief to the patriarch. Rachel, at the birth of Joseph, expressed the wish that God would give her another son: "The LORD shall add to me another son" (ch. xxx. 24); this wish was now fulfilled about fourteen years after it had been made. She did, however, not enjoy the pleasure which the birth of another son would have afforded her, for she died at the time of his birth. When Rachel felt that her end was drawing near, she bestowed upon the new-born child the name "Ben-oni," *i. e., son of my affliction*, but Jacob called him בְּנִימִין (*Benyamin*) "Benjamin," *i. e., son of the right hand*, which according to Scripture usage of the phrase means, that he was *very dear* to him. Some ancient interpreters explain the name, *son of old age*, as if written בְּנִימִים (*Benyamim*) *i. e., son of days*, that is, a son obtained in advanced age, which is certainly very appropriate. And indeed in chapter xlv. 20, Benjamin is spoken of as זְקֵנִים רַךְ (*yeled zekunim*), "son of old age."

19. *And Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.*

20. *And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.*

Although the precise meaning of the words **נְבֵרַת הָאָרֶץ** *(Kivrath ha'ārets lavo Ephrathah)*, "a distance of land to come to Ephrath" v. 16, is not very clear, as the derivation of the word **נְבֵרַת** (*kivrath*), is very doubtful, it is still certain that Rachel died, and was buried in the neighborhood of Bethlehem. The pillar which Jacob erected on the grave was always greatly revered by the ancient Hebrews. When Rabbi Benjamin, of Tudela, visited the place about 1160, the monument on the grave consisted of eleven stones surmounted by a cupola resting on four pillars. Petachia, who also visited the place in the same century, states that at the top there was a twelfth stone, on which Jacob's name was engraved. Several later travellers give a similar account. In the seventeenth century the Turkish government had a small square building erected over the grave, and surrounded it by a wall. Mr. Buckingham has given a full description of this structure. He remarks: "We entered it on the south side by an aperture through which it was difficult to crawl, as it has no doorway, and found the inside a square mass of masonry in the centre, built up from the floor nearly to the roof, and of such a size as to leave barely a narrow passage for walking round it. It is plastered with white stucco on the outer surface, and is sufficiently large and high to enclose within it any ancient pillar that might have been found on the grave of Rachel." (Trav. p. 217. See also Rosenmüller, Bibl. Geogr. II, ii. 287.) The Mohammedans evince a great desire to be buried in the precincts of Rachel's grave. Mr. Carne says: "All round this simple tomb lie strewn the graves of the Mussulmans. No slender pillars of wood or stone, with inscriptions in letters of gold, are here: not a single memorial, which this people are otherwise so fond of erecting in their cemeteries. It seems to be sufficient that they are placed beneath the favorite sod: the small and numerous mounds mark the places of their graves." (Recollections of the East, p. 160.) Bethlehem was situated in the territory of the tribe of Judah. It is sometimes called "Bethlehem-Judah" to distinguish it from another town of that name in the territory of Zebulun, (Josh. xix. 15). It is also frequently spoken of as "the city of David" who was born and brought up there. The name **בֵּית לָחֶם** (*Beth-lechem*) "Bethlehem" denotes *house of bread*, and was no doubt so called from the great fertility of the surrounding plains. Hence also its earlier name **אֶפְרַתָּה** (*Ephrathah*), i.e., the fertile town. It is now only a small town of about 3,000 souls, but is constantly visited by numerous pilgrims, and by all eastern travellers. The natives still call it by its ancient name *Beit-lahm*.

Jacob again continued his journey, and spread his tent beyond the tower of **מִגְדַּל עֵדֶר** *Migdal Eder*, i. e., the tower of the flock

(v. 21). Travellers have not been able to fix the situation of this place. The prophet Micah, indeed, mentions a "Migdal Eder" in connection with Zion: "And thou O (Migdal Eder) tower of the flock the hill of the daughter of Zion," (ch. iv. 8,) and tradition has pointed out a tower on the eastern side of Mount Zion as being the tower where Jacob had "spread his tent;" but the place where Jacob spread his tent, after leaving Bethlehem, must have been south of that town, and could not have been in the proximity of Jerusalem. Such towers from which shepherds watched their flocks were most likely very common, like the towers in the vineyards (comp. Isa. v. 2,) or huts in the garden (see Isa. i. 8). The narrative does not inform us how long Jacob remained in this place, but during his stay there another sore affliction came upon him, Reuben his eldest son committed incest (v. 22). From the fact that the hideous crime is only mentioned as having been perpetrated, and not the slightest allusion being made as to what Jacob did or say when he heard of it, we may infer that he was so astounded and overwhelmed with grief that he was unable at the time to give utterance of his horror of the deed and pronounce the merited punishment. But although the punishment was for some years deferred, it came at last. When the sons of Jacob were standing around his death-bed to hear from his lips the prophetic declarations what would befall them in later days, the dying patriarch deprived Reuben of his birth-right and all the privileges appertaining to it. (See ch. xlix. 3, 4.) We may remark that in the Hebrew Bible there is a space left after the words, וַיִּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל (*vaiyishma Yisrael*) "And Israel heard it," as if something had been omitted, and in the Greek version the words: "And it appeared evil in his sight," are inserted. There is, however, no authority for such an addition to the text; and the interpolation is not found in any other ancient version.

The sacred historian, after enumerating the twelve sons of Jacob, adds, verse 26: "These *are* the sons of Jacob, who were born to him in Padan-aram." Benjamin, we have seen, was born in Canaan, and the language must therefore be regarded rather as popular than exact, not thinking it necessary to mention Benjamin particularly as forming an exception. The Scriptures abound with such popular language. Thus, the apostle Paul, Heb. xi. 1-13, after enumerating the ancient pious men, says: "These all died in faith," but Enoch, who was one of them (v. 5), did not die, but was translated. Again, 1 Cor. xv. 5, it is said that Christ appeared "to the twelve," and yet the suicide of Judas had reduced the number of the apostles to *eleven*.

Jacob set out on his journey again, and came to Hebron, where his father sojourned. As no mention is made of

Rebekah, it is generally supposed that she was dead when Jacob returned home. According to a Hebrew tradition she died at the same time as her nurse Deborah, soon after having sent her to Jacob to invite him to come home, in accordance to her promise. (ch. xxvii. 45.)

28. *And the days of Isaac were a hundred and eighty years.*

29. *And Isaac expired and died, and was gathered to his people, old and full of days; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.*

Although Isaac's death did not occur until twenty-two years after Jacob's return home, the sacred writer mentions it here, so that the history of Joseph, which follows, may not be interrupted. If recorded in chronological order, it would come in about the time of Joseph's elevation in Egypt. Isaac was one hundred and thirty-eight years old when Jacob departed from home, and as the latter remained twenty years in Mesopotamia, on his return into Canaan Isaac must have been one hundred and fifty-eight years old; and as his death took place when he was one hundred and eighty years old, it follows that he survived his son's return twenty-two years. Esau, coming from the distant mountains of Seir to take part in the burial of his father, affords another proof of his forgiving spirit, that he cherished no ill-feelings towards his father or his brother.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

In this chapter the sacred historian gives the genealogy of Esau, which clearly shows the fulfilment of the promise made to Isaac respecting him (Gen. xxvii. 30-40). The list of Esau's descendants is remarkable for its regularity of arrangement, being divided into six sections: 1. The *children* from his three wives (1-8). 2. The *families* of his children (9-14). 3. The *dukedom*s arising from the families (15-19). 4. The *descendants* of Seir, the Horite (20-30). 5. The *kings* of the land of Edom (31-39). 6. The *dukedom*s of the Edomites, according to their habitations (40-43).

1. *And these are the generations of Esau, that is Edom.*

Esau, we have seen from ch. xxv. 30, received the surname "Edom" from his inordinate craving after the mess of *red pottage*, the term *אדום* (*Edom*), denoting red. The surname

Edom is, in our verse, appropriately added to the name Esau, because it became the national designation of his descendants.

2. *Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the grand-daughter of Zibeon the Hivite.*

3. *And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter sister of Nebajoth.*

The names of Esau's wives given in the above verses differ from those given in previous accounts, and in one instance also the name of the father. According to ch. xxvi. 34, and ch. xxviii. 9, the names of Esau's wives were "Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite," and "Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael." On comparing the two accounts it will be seen that *two* of the names are entirely different, namely: instead of "*Judith*" and "*Mahalath*" in the former accounts, we have in our verses "*Adah*" and "*Aholibamah*"; and although the name "*Bashemath*" occurs in both accounts, yet in the former account she is said to be the daughter of "Elon," whilst in our account she is spoken of as "the daughter of Ishmael." The difference in the two accounts has proved greatly perplexing to critics in their endeavour to reconcile them. The difficulty, however, in harmonizing the two statements arises chiefly from the great antiquity of the records, and the sparsity of information they contain, whilst there are no other sources from which any information on the subject might be drawn. To this we may add too, our want of knowledge as to the customs and usages of those very remote times. Our infidel and rationalistic writers were therefore not justified in resorting to such extreme views as delaring the accounts to contain either irreconcilable contradictions, or that they betray two distinct authors who drew their information from different traditions.

Now, although we may not be able to speak with any certainty on the subject in question, yet the remarks we shall offer will, we are sure, commend themselves to the reader as being at least plausible. When we take into consideration that other Scripture personages appear under two different names, much of the difficulty which our subject presents will at once disappear. Thus we have *Esau* and *Edom*; *Jacob* and *Israel*; *Benjamin* and *Benoni*; *Mash*, fourth son of Aram (Gen. x. 23), called in 1 Chron. i. 17, *Meshech*; *Jachin*, son of Simeon (Gen. xlv. 10), called in 1 Chron. iv. 24 *Jarib*. Sarah was also called *Iscah*; *Maacha*, daughter of Abishalom, wife of Rehoboam (1 Kings xv. 2), is in 2 Chron. xiii. 2, called *Michaiah* the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. Other examples of persons bearing two different names might be adduced. Here requires

also to be mentioned that it was no uncommon thing to bestow new names on women when they were married. The Arabs, at the present day, often give surnames, and are sometimes called by one name, and sometimes by the other. Michael's conjectures, that Esau's wives were sometimes called by the names they bore in Idumea, and sometimes by the names that were given to them in Palestine. As regards "Anah," the father of Abolibamah, being, in ch. xxvi. 34, called "Beeri," the acute writer, Hengstenberg, supposes that he received the latter name from his having discovered the warm springs mentioned in ch. xxxvi. 24, the name בְּעִירִי (*Beeri*) denoting *spring finder*. From the foregoing remarks it will be seen that the two different accounts, although they present difficulties, yet do not preclude the possibility of reconciliation.

6. *And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had acquired in the land of Canaan; and went into another country on account of his brother Jacob.*

7. *For their riches was more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle.*

Esau's removal from home, and his taking up his abode in Mount Seir, must have taken place before Jacob's return to his father's house, for we have seen that when Jacob returned from Mesopotamia he "sent messengers before him to Esau his brother, to the land of Seir, the country of Edom" (ch. xxxii. 4), from which it is evident that Esau had already emigrated. But as the sacred writer, in our chapter, gives the political history of Esau in order to render it more complete, he goes back to his emigration which had taken place many years before. Nachmanides, and other Rabbinic writers explain that Esau sometime after the flight of Jacob from home had removed with part of his cattle to the land of Edom and occupied the low lands of Seir, and that after his brother's return finding that there was not sufficient pasture for their large number of cattle, he removed, with the other part of his possession, and conquered the mountainous districts. But our passage clearly speaks of one emigration only with all belonging to his household, and with all the wealth he had acquired in the land of Canaan. Seir was the name of a chief of the Horites, and the mountainous district was called after him. God had ordained that the region of Mount Seir should become the inheritance of Esau, hence the positive command to the Israelites when they were passing through the border of the children of Esau, "Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of

their land, no, not so much as a foot's breadth, because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession," (Deut. ii. 5). In verses 2, 14, "Aholibamah" is said to be the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon; but the Hebrew word בַּת (*bath*), *daughter*, is also used in the sense of *grand-daughter*, so that we should translate "the daughter of Anah the grand-daughter of Zibeon." The Hebrew word אֵלִיפֶה (*alluph*), translated in the Authorized Version "duke," properly signifies a *leader* or *chieftain*, called by the Arabians *Sheikh*. In verse 22, "Timna" is mentioned as the "sister of Lothan." The reason why she is especially noticed is, because she became famous as being the mother of the Amalekites.

24. *And these are the children of Zibeon, both Ajah and Anah; this was that Anah who found the hot (or sulphur) springs in the desert, when he fed the asses of Zibeon his father.*

As there was another Anah, namely, the fourth son of Seir (v. 20), hence it is said in regard to the son of Zibeon that "this was that Anah who found the hot springs." In the Authorized Version it is rendered, "This was that Anah who found the mules." It is not easily seen how the translators obtained the signification of "mules" from the Hebrew word יַמִּים (*yemim*), which is now generally acknowledged to denote "hot springs," hence correctly rendered in the Vulgate "*aquæ calidæ*." The proper Hebrew word for *mules* would be פֶּרָדִים (*peradim*). It is now generally believed that the *hot springs* which Anah found are the hot sulphurous springs of Calirrhoë, about one hour and a half east of the Dead Sea. These springs became in after time celebrated for their salubrity, and large buildings were erected for the reception of invalids, of which, however, nothing remains but some scattered fragments of pottery and tiles. Josephus, in speaking of Herod's distemper, remarks "that he bathed himself in warm baths that were in Calirrhoë, which, besides their other general virtues, were also fit to drink, which water runs into the lake called Asphaltitis" (Ant. xvii., ch. vi. par. 5.) There were also some ancient Roman copper coins found there. According to an ancient tradition "Jabab, the son of Zerah" (v. 33), the second king who reigned in the land of Edom, was Job, and that he received the name אִיוֹב (*Iyov*) Job, i. e., *one persecuted* after his trial.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1. *And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.*

The sacred narrative enters in this chapter on the history of Joseph the favorite son of Jacob. The history is replete with moral lessons, and is acknowledged to be the most beautiful piece of biography in the Bible. It has been well observed that we behold in Joseph, "one who in every period of life, in every change of condition, in every variety of relation, secures our confidence, our respect, our love. In adversity, we see him evincing the most exemplary patience, and resignation; in temptation, the most inflexible firmness; in exaltation the most unaffected simplicity, integrity, gentleness, and humility. Whether as a son, a brother, a servant, a father, a master, a ruler, we behold him exhibiting a deportment equally amiable and praiseworthy." The history of Joseph illustrates also in the most striking manner God's providential dealings in bringing to pass from apparently trivial occurrences the greatest results.

Jacob had now taken up his abode at Hebron, and from that place his flocks in charge of his sons, went from place to place in quest of pasturage.

2. *This is the history of Jacob. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he was feeding the flock with his brothers; and he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought to their father their evil report.*

The rendering of the Authorized and Revised Versions "These are the generations of Jacob" is not suitable to the context, as no genealogical account of Jacob either immediately precedes or follows. We have already stated that the Hebrew word *תולדות* (*toledoth*) denotes *generations, genealogy, history, family history*, and that the word must accordingly be rendered as best suits the context. As the events in the life of Joseph henceforward form the chief topics of the narrative, we would naturally have expected to read, "This is the history of Joseph;" but as long as the father lived the events occurring in his family were reckoned with his history. "And he was a lad." The Hebrew word *נער* (*na'ar*) a *boy* or *lad*, is evidently here used in the sense of *shepherd-boy*, "and he was a shepherd-boy with the sons of Bilhah." "And Joseph brought to their father their evil report;" not a few of our modern critics have in unmeasured terms censured this conduct of Joseph, and charged him with being a tattler, wishing to ingratiate himself in his father's

favour, by bringing idle tales to him. These critics, however, have evidently neglected to consider the true import of the language employed in the original, which is very emphatic. The sacred historian says, that "Joseph brought רעה רעה (eth dibbatham ra'ah), their very evil report." The noun רבה (dibbakh), itself denotes an *evil report*, and the use of the adjective רעה (ra'ah) *evil*, in connection with it, was evidently designed to indicate that his brothers had committed some *flagrant act* which he considered himself in duty bound to make known to his father. The language employed in the original, we maintain, entirely clears Joseph from the charge of tattle-bearing.

3. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a long robe.

The reason assigned in our verse for Jacob bestowing a greater degree of love upon Joseph than his other children was, "because he was the son of his old age"; but here it may justly be asked, was not Benjamin rather "the son of his old age," as he was the youngest of Jacob's sons? We think, therefore, that the true import of the words כִּי-בֶן-זְקֻנִים לוֹ (*chi ven zekunim lo*) is afforded in the Chaldee Version, where the passage is paraphrased, "for he was a wise son to him," which certainly presents a more worthy reason for Jacob evincing a greater degree of love for Joseph than his other sons. The translator has regarded the expression, "son of old age," to be employed here, in the sense of *wise* or *sagacious son*, that is, Joseph having displayed in his youth the wisdom of one advanced in years. This would indeed be a reasonable motive for a greater share of love being lavished upon him. Although a parent ought to bestow an equal share of affection upon all his children, yet it frequently happens that one child by its conduct will endear itself above the others. But Jacob did not show his partiality, merely by his demeanour towards Joseph, but in a more marked manner, by making for him "a long robe," such as was generally worn by persons of wealth or distinction.

It was this mark of distinction which aroused the jealousy of his brothers, and it was certainly an unwise act on the part of Jacob, for it was sure to lead to envy and domestic strife. In the Authorized Version כֶּתֶנֶת פָּסִים* (*kethoneth passim*) is rendered a coat of *many* colours, which is not admissible. The proper meaning of the phrase is either "a robe of pieces," it is a robe made of pieces sewed together. It is, however, mere

*פָּסִים (*passim*) either from the Chaldee פַּס (*pas*) the *palm of the hand*, also a *piece*; or from פָּסַס (*pasas*) to *expand*.

conjecture, that the *pieces* were of different colours, or "a long robe," such as was worn as a mark of distinction. The latter rendering is now generally adopted, and certainly accords better with the prevailing custom of those times when such long robes were worn as a mark of distinction. The phrase occurs only again in 2 Sam. xiii. 18, where it is used in reference to a long robe worn by Tamar, the daughter of David. (Comp. Josph. Ant. b. vii. ch. viii. par. 1.) Such aristocratic robes we find depicted on Egyptian monuments, and were also common among the Greeks. In the Septuagint the phrase is rendered *χιτων ποικίλος*, *variegated coat*; in the Vulgate, *Tunica polymita*, *embroidered coat*. "And he made him a long robe;" that is, he ordered it to be made. We have already had occasion to state, that according to Scripture usage, a person that orders a thing to be done, is said to be the doer of it.

When Joseph's brothers saw that he stood in greater favour with their father they conceived a hatred against him, so that they could not speak in a friendly manner with him. This hatred was greatly increased by the dreams which Joseph dreamt, and which he told to his brothers.

6. And he said to them, *Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamt.*

7. *For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, behold, my sheaf rose, and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round about, and bowed down to my sheaf.*

We have already drawn attention to the fact, that supernatural dreams designed to presage some future important event, left a deep impression on the dreamers to assure them that they are no ordinary meaningless dreams. The dream which Joseph dreamt evidently made such a deep impression on his mind as to induce him to tell it to his brothers. But although he could not have failed to perceive, that the dream foreboded some future advancement above his brothers, yet his gentle and kind nature precludes the idea of having told the dream in a boastful spirit, but that it was rather done in the simplicity of his youthful heart. The nature of the dream was, however, well calculated to increase the hatred which the brothers cherished towards Joseph. That they fully perceived the scope of the dream is evident from their rebuke, "Wilt thou indeed reign over us? or wilt thou indeed have dominion over us?" (v. 8.)

9. *And he dreamt yet another dream, and told it to his brothers, and said, Behold, I have dreamt a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me.*

This dream is precisely of the same import as the preceding one, being, however, somewhat enlarged in its scope so as to include also his parents, symbolized by "the sun and the moon," who were to pay homage to him. In the Authorized Version the article "the" is also expressed before "eleven stars," which makes it appear as if eleven particular stars were referred to, but in the original the article is not given before *eleven*. When Pharaoh dreamt two different dreams, but both forboding one and the same future event, Joseph declared to the king that it was doubled "because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass" (ch. xli. 32); and so, no doubt, the duplication of Joseph's dream was to indicate that the matter was firmly established before God. We may also remark that sheaves of corn are symbolic of *prosperity*, whilst the heavenly bodies symbolize *dominion* and *power*.

10. *And he told it to his father and to his brothers: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream which thou hast dreamt? Shall I and thy mother and thy brothers indeed come to bow ourselves down to thee to the earth?*

Jacob interpreted the dream correctly although Rachel, the mother of Joseph, was already dead. Rosenmüller, and many other commentators explain that Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, is meant by "mother," but surely this is a very forced interpretation; how could Bilhah be reasonably spoken of as Joseph's mother? Some writers have supposed that Leah was meant, but the same objection holds good with regard to her also. Delitzsch says "Rachel is meant, who, although dead, was neither forgotten nor lost." But this does by no means obviate the difficulty, for although Rachel no doubt lived in the memory of Jacob, still he could not consistently speak of her as coming and bowing down before Joseph. The most reasonable interpretation seems to be, that "the sun the moon and eleven stars" in the dream symbolize *the whole family*. The sheaves in the first dream represent only the brothers as forming Jacob's family, but in the second dream to make the representation of the house of Jacob more complete, the parents are added. The scope of the dream merely is, that the whole household of Jacob then alive should pay homage to Joseph, for it is by no means certain that any of the patriarchs wives went down to Egypt with him. They are certainly nowhere mentioned as having done so. Jacob, although he

rebuked Joseph, evidently did not regard the dreams as meaningless or idle, for שָׁמַר אֶת הַדְּבָר (shamar eth haddavar) "he kept the matter," that is, he laid it to heart, and seriously pondered over it as being possibly of prophetic significance. Jacob probably administered the rebuke in the hope of dispelling the ill-feeling which his sons had conceived towards Joseph on account of the dreams, in this, however, as the sequel of the narrative shows, he was sorely disappointed.

12. *And his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.*

This verse furnishes the first step towards the fulfilment of the dreams. The pasturage in the valley of Hebron, where Jacob had then been dwelling became exhausted, and his sons had gone with their flocks to Shechem, very likely to the field which their father had bought (ch. xxxiii. 19). For some reason or other Jacob appears to have become anxious about the welfare of his sons and the flocks, probably being absent longer than usual, and requested Joseph to go to Shechem and see whether all is well, and bring him word. This is the second step towards the fulfilment of the dreams. Before Joseph, however, arrived at Shechem his brothers had removed from there; but he did not return to his father and inform him of their removal, but went in search of his brothers, and whilst thus wandering about a man met him, who asked him what he was seeking; and upon Joseph informing him that he was in search of his brothers, the stranger told him that he had heard them say "Let us go to Dothan;" and Joseph went after them, and found them in that place. Dothan was about seventeen miles north of Shechem, and not less than seventy miles from Hebron. It was situated on the great caravan road leading from Gilead into Egypt. In all this we cannot fail to perceive the guiding hand of the Almighty to carry out His design. God had destined Joseph to become a ruler over Egypt, and the preserver of his father's house; and we now find him following his brothers to Dothan on the caravan road to Egypt, where an opportunity would readily offer itself to bring him down into that country.

18. *And when they saw him at a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired against him to kill him.*

19. *And they said one unto another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.*

20. *Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, Some wild beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.*

There seems to have been no bounds to the wickedness of Jacob's sons. Even the closest tie of relationship afforded no

barrier to their wicked designs. What an awful spectacle does the sacred narrative here present to us? Nine brothers deliberately conspiring together to kill their younger brother, whose only offence was, that he had dreamed two dreams. Not for a moment considering, too, that this murder might also bring about the premature death of their father on hearing of the loss of his beloved son. "Behold the dreamer cometh:" in the original it is *בעל החלמות* (*ba'el hachalomoth*), "*the master of dreams*," an idiomatic expression implying one who is addicted to dreaming, or makes a practice of it. Thus a *greedy person* is called *בעל נפש* (*ba'el nephesh*), a *master of appetite* (Prov. xxxiii. 2).—"And cast him into one of the pits." The Hebrew word *בור* (*bor*) signifies a *pit*, a *cistern*, a *grave*; and the reading of *בורות* (*boroth*) in our passage by "*cisterns*," instead of "*pits*," would certainly be more suitable, as along the caravan roads *cisterns* were constructed in which, during the rainy season, water was collected for the use of travellers.

21. *And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, Let us not kill him.*

22. *And Reuben said to them, Shed no blood; cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him: that he might deliver him out of their hand, to bring him to his father.*

Reuben, who was the eldest, and whose duty it was to exercise a supervision over the younger brothers, now determined, if possible, to save the life of Joseph. He had inflicted on his father a great injury, and had caused him an immeasurable amount of grief (ch. xxxii. 23), which could not be undone, but here was an opportunity to render him a great service by saving the life of his beloved son. In this undertaking, however, he knew that it was necessary to act very cautiously, for he was aware that his brothers were bent upon killing Joseph, and that it was of no use to endeavour to dissuade them from it. He therefore had recourse to a stratagem. Knowing that the council of the eldest son is always respected, he advised them to cast him into one of the cisterns, so that their hands might at least be free from the shedding of their brother's blood. The plan was one which would readily commend itself to their approval, as it would insure the death of Joseph without themselves shedding his blood. Reuben, on the other hand, hoped to find an opportunity to be able to restore him safely to his father. Reuben's proposal was readily accepted, and at once acted upon, for no sooner had Joseph come up to his brothers than they seized him, stripped him of the long robe, and cast him into the pit. The narrative states that "*the pit was empty there was no water in it*" (v. 24), as no rain falls during the

summer months, the water in the cisterns becomes gradually exhausted. Joseph, however, must have soon perished in the pit from thirst, and hunger, and exposure. Although the narrative does not here mention that Joseph entreated his brothers to have pity upon him, yet from their own confession afterwards, it is evident that he besought them in tears to spare his life: "And they said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear." (ch. xlii. 21). The heartless brothers having got rid, as they supposed, of the object of their hatred, and proved his dreams to be meaningless, they sat down "to eat bread," that is, to take one of the regular meals. The atrocious act they had just perpetrated did not deter them from enjoying themselves; they ate and drank, regardless of the piteous tears and anguish of their young and gentle brother.

25. *And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes, and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing tragacanth, and balsam, and ladanum, going to carry it down to Egypt.*

From the most ancient times a caravan trade was carried on between Arabia and Egypt, and in order to facilitate commerce, and to render the passing through the Arabian desert less precarious, stations were formed at suitable distances, and cisterns or reservoirs for collecting water during the rainy season were dug. (See Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs* i. 45, 46). Egypt had in the time of Joseph already reached a high state of civilisation, and the various varieties of spicery, and perfumes, the products of Arabia found a ready market in Egypt. The articles most in demand were spicery and perfumes, such as were required for domestic use, festivals, or embalming, or medicinal purposes. Those used for embalming were exceedingly fragrant, and enabled friends to keep the mummies for generations in their houses. The articles mentioned in our verse, were of the costly products of Arabia. The first in Hebrew called נכאח (*nechoth), is now generally believed to denote the gum tragacanth, which is highly valued on account of its medicinal properties. (Dioscor. iii. 23). This gum exudes from the thorny shrub *Astragalus tragacantha*, and is found in Arabia and Palestine. The second article mentioned is, in Hebrew, called צרר (tseri), and is no doubt the balsam which is mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel as forming one of the articles which Israel

*נכאח (nechoth) is a noun of the inf. form from נכא (nacha) to grind.

צרר (tseri) from צרה (tsarah), if from the Chaldee, to make an incision, to cleave; but, if from the Arabic, to flow.

and Judah brought to the market of Tyre. (Ezek. xxvii. 17). The prophet Jeremiah speaks of it as an ointment used in healing of wounds. (ch. viii. 22; ch. li. 8). On account of its healing properties it found a ready market in Egypt. (Comp. Jer. xli. 11). It was most abundantly found in Gilead, and hence usually spoken of in Scripture as "the balm of Gilead." The balsam-tree was not a native of Judea, but was introduced there, and successfully cultivated in the vicinity of Jericho. Vespasian and Titus brought specimens from there to Rome, which they exhibited as a great curiosity. The balsam is obtained by making an incision in the trunk or branches, but the cuts must be made very carefully, and either with a glass or bone knife. The use of an iron instrument is injurious to the plant. The juice, which is also called opobalsamum, exudes in small drops, and is carefully collected in wool. It is of exceedingly sweet odour, and on account of its scarcity demands a high price. In Alexander the Great's time it was sold at double its weight in silver. Human ingenuity, even in those days, found soon a mode to adulterate it, by which fraud great fortunes were made. The third article mentioned is in Hebrew called *לדן* (*lot*) *ladanum*, Greek *λιδανον*, a product common in Arabia. It is an odoriferous gum which exudes from the shrub *cistus creticus*, of Linnæus, or *cistus ladanifera*. It is much used in Egypt as a medicine and an aromatic, and Grand Cairo still affords a ready market for it. It is said that the *ladanum* was accidentally discovered by shepherds from their goats cropping the shoots of the shrub. The merchants are in one verse called "Ishmaelites," but in verse 28 they are called "Midianites." This is no discrepancy, but arises from the Ishmaelites and Midianites, being both descendants from Abraham, but the former being the more powerful (with the exception of the Hebrews), and commanded by far the chief trade, hence other tribes inhabiting the same region and carrying on the same pursuits were sometimes also called Ishmaelites. Indeed, all the Arabians at the present day boast of having descended from Ishmael.

The fulfilment of the dream rendered it necessary that Joseph should be carried down to Egypt, and Providence ordered it so that Reuben's good intention to restore him to his father was not to be carried out. Judah, who was also anxious to save Joseph's life, and who apparently was an eloquent speaker, proposed to his brothers that they should sell him to the Midianitish merchants, pleading as a reason that he was their brother and their flesh. They readily consented to Judah's proposal, no doubt thinking that in that distant country, and among entire strangers, there would be but little chance of his dreams becoming realized. When the Ishmael-

ites drew near, they lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to them for "twenty *shekels* of silver" (v. 28). According to Lev. xxvii. 5, the estimation of a male "from five to twenty years was twenty *shekels*," whilst from twenty to sixty the estimation was fifty *shekels*" (v. 3). The price paid for Joseph, although amounting only to about five dollars of our money, yet it appears to have been the ordinary price for a servant not twenty years old.

29. *And Reuben returned to the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.*

30. *And he returned to his brothers, and said, the child is not there, and I, whither shall I go?*

It appears from this passage that Reuben was not present when Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites. He must have left his brothers immediately after the youth was cast into the pit, no doubt with the intention of assisting him out of it, and to restore him to their father. In order not to arouse any suspicion on the part of his brothers, he probably made a detour in going to the pit, which would account for his ignorance of Joseph having been taken away and sold by his brothers, they having taken the nearest way to the pit, and removed him before Reuben came up to it. We can readily understand his great horror when he found that in the short time that had elapsed since the youth had been cast into the pit, he had already disappeared. He at once hastened to his brothers, and in anguish exclaimed, "The child is not *there*, and I, whither shall I go," an idiomatic expression corresponding to our expression, "and now what shall or can I do?"

In order to conceal the wicked deed, the brothers had recourse to falsehood and hypocrisy. And when was ever a crime committed when the criminal had not recourse to lying in order to shield himself from its consequences? They killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the long robe in the blood, and sent it to their father with the message: "This we have found: recognize now whether it be thy son's coat or not?" It appears that they were afraid to bring the coat themselves, their language or actions, when standing face to face with their sorrowing father, might betray them, they therefore sent the coat by messengers. Jacob at once recognised the coat as the one he had made for his favourite son Joseph, and naturally concluded that he must indeed have been torn in pieces by a wild beast. Great as must have been the grief of the aged patriarch at seeing the evidence of his beloved son's death, it would be still more intensified by the thought that he himself had sent him unprotected on his journey; and when the mem-

bers of his family tried to soothe his grief with consoling words he refused to be comforted, and in bitter anguish exclaimed. "I shall indeed go down into Hades to my son mourning" (v. 35). This solemn declaration of Jacob clearly implies that he looked forward to meet with his son after he himself had departed this life, or else he would merely have said, *I shall go down mourning to the grave*. In the original the term *שְׁאוֹל* (*Sheol*) is employed, which, throughout the Old Testament is generally used to denote *the abode of the departed spirits, or Hades*, whilst *grave* is either expressed by *קֶבֶר* (*kever*) or *בּוֹר* (*bor*). That Jacob should hope to meet with his son in *Sheol*, the spirit world, we can readily understand; but he could surely not have expected to meet him in the *grave*, for he thought he had been devoured by wild beasts. The passage, therefore, affords another unquestionable proof that the Old Testament is not silent in respect to the declaration of the doctrine of a *future state*, as so many writers insist upon.

36. *And the Midianites sold him into Egypt, to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, chief of the guards.*

The name *פּוֹטִיפָר* (*Potiphar*), given in our passage, is a contracted form of *פּוֹטִי תָרַע* (*Poti-phaera*) (see ch. xli. 45; xlii. 20), and denotes *one devoted to the sun*, it was therefore an appropriate name of the priests of On (*Heliopolis*). The name is often found in hieroglyphic inscriptions. Potiphar is, in our verse, said to have been "an officer of Pharaoh"; the primary meaning of *סָרִיס* (*saris*), is *eunuch*. It is, however, evident that the term in course of time was applied also to an officer in the royal service. (Comp. 1 Sam. viii. 15; 1 Kings xxii. 9; Jer. xxxix. 3). The officer of Pharaoh is described to have been *שַׂר הַטְּבַחִים* (*sar hattabbachim*), a designation which primarily denotes *chief of the slaughterers, or chief of the executioners*,

* The term *Sheol* is, in the English Version, always rendered either by *pit*, *grave*, or *hell*, but never by its proper meaning, the *realm or abode of departed spirits*; in order, therefore that the reader—who may perhaps have become somewhat rusty in his Hebrew—may be enabled to judge for himself from the context which would be the most suitable rendering of the Hebrew term in any passage where it is employed, I will give here a list of all the places where the word occurs in the Old Testament, so that the reader will only have to substitute the word *Sheol*, instead of the word *grave*, *pit*, or *hell*, as the case may be: Gen. xxxvii. 35; xlii. 38; xlv. 29, 31; Num. xvi. 30, 33; Deut. xxxii. 22; 1 Sam. ii. 6, 2 Sam. xxii. 6; 1 Kings ii. 6, 9; Job. vii. 9 ix. 8; xiv. 13; xvii. 13, 16; xxi. 13; xxiv. 19; xxvi. 6; Ps. vi. 6, (Eng. Vers. v. 5); ix. 18, (Eng. Vers. v. 17); xvi. 10; xviii. 6, (Eng. Vers. v. 5); xxx. 4, (Eng. Vers. v. 3); xxxi. 18, (Eng. Vers. v. 17); xlix. 15, 16, (Eng. Vers. 14, 15); lv. 16, (Eng. Vers. v. 15); lxxxvi. 13; lxxxviii. 4, (Eng. Vers. v. 3); lxxxix. 49, (Eng. Vers. v. 48); cxvi. 3; cxxxix. 8; cxli. 7; Prov. i. 12; vii. 27; ix. 18; xv. 11, 24; xxiii. 14; xxvii. 20; xxx. 16; Eccles. ix. 10; Is. v. 14; xiv. 9, 11, 15; xxviii. 15, 18; xxxviii. 10; lvii. 6; Ezek. xxx. 15, 16, 17; xxxii. 27; Hos. xiii. 14; Amos ix. 2; Jon. ii. 2; Hab. ii. 5.

but from other places of the Old Testament where the title occurs, it is certain it was applied to an important officer of state. According to ch. xl. 3, 4, Potiphar had charge of the state prison. In 2 Kings, ch. xxv. 8, the title is applied to Nebuzaradan a general of Nebuchadnezzar, who marched with a part of the Babylonian army against Jerusalem, which he captured and destroyed. In Daniel, ch. ii. 14, the title is applied to Arioch, who was entrusted with the carrying out of the King's decree to slay the wise men of Babylon. From these passages it is clear that שַׂר הַטְּבָחִים (*Sar hattabbachim*) does not denote the chief cook (*ἀρχιμαγειρος*) as the Septuagint has rendered it.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1. *And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to an Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.*

2. *And Judah saw there a daughter of a Canaanite whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went to her.*

The reader will perceive, that this chapter interrupts the narrative of Joseph merely for the purpose of introducing some particulars connected with the family history of Judah, which are chiefly important as showing the origin of the three leading families of the royal tribe Judah. (Comp. Num. xxxvi. 19-22.) The chapter was probably introduced here as being the most convenient place, although as we shall presently show, the events narrated in it must have transpired some years before. Judah's conduct in taking to wife the daughter of a Canaanite is most unaccountable. He evinced a desire to preserve the purity of his family by joining with the rest of his brothers in strenuously objecting to the alliance of his sister Dinah with Shechem, yet he himself deliberately enters into a union with a Canaanitish woman. This act of Judah affords a striking proof of the wisdom and necessity of the Mosaic precautionary laws to prevent the social intercourse of the Hebrews with the idolatrous nations by which they were surrounded, and whose seductive practices induced so many of the Israelites to forsake the worship of Jehovah. Judah left his brothers and went to Adullam, one of the most ancient cities in the plain of Judah. In the time of Joshua, it was the seat of Canaanitish Kings. (See Josh. xii. 15.) The cave in which David took refuge when persecuted by Saul was in the neighbourhood of this city. At Adullam, Judah made the acquaint-

ance of one of the citizens whose name was Hirah, with whom he took up his abode. The entrance into bad company, is the beginning of a downward career. During his stay with his acquaintance, Judah saw "the daughter of a Canaanite whose name was Shuah "and took her to wife." We can readily imagine, that this marriage must have caused intense grief to the aged patriarch. And how frequently do we at the present day see young men following their own inclinations, regardless of the bitter anguish they may give to their parents. The Canaanitish woman bore to Judah three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah. The evil results from this unhallowed marriage soon became apparent.

When Er, the first-born, was grown up, Judah selected a wife for him, "whose name was Tamar," (v. 6). The name *תָּמָר* (*Tamar*) denotes a *palm*. She, very probably, was also a Canaanite. There is, however, nothing known of her parentage. Er acted wickedly in the sight of God, and the Almighty slew him. The narrative does not inform us what the wicked deeds of Er had been, but that they must have been of an atrocious character, may be gathered from the severity of the punishment, in thus being cut off by a special stroke of Divine judgment: "and the Lord slew him," (v. 7). Judah now desired his second son to marry the childless widow of his brother, to raise up offspring for him, in order that his name might be preserved. But the wicked act of Onan, as recorded in verse 9, kindled the anger of God, and the Lord slew him also, (v. 10). The mentioning of Onan marrying, as brother-in-law, the widow of his deceased brother, is very important, as it shows that such seemed already an established custom in the time of Jacob, and did not originate with the Mosaic matrimonial laws. Moses, however, incorporated the custom into his code, in order to prevent the landed property from passing out of a family through want of an heir, and thus preserve more the equality of the citizens. We can readily understand too, that the allotted portion of the sacred soil would be highly prized, and its loss by passing out of the family be regarded as a great misfortune. The law by which a man is obliged to marry the widow of a deceased brother, if he died without issue, is distinctly laid down in Deut. xxv. 5-10, and is by modern writers frequently spoken of as the *Levirate-law*, from the old Latin word *levir* which, according to Festus, signifies a *husband's brother*. By this law the first-born son of such a marriage, becomes the rightful heir of the deceased brother: he is, in fact, regarded as the deceased's brother's son. Lest, however, the law might in some instances prove oppressive, for a brother may sometimes have good grounds for objecting to marry the widow, provision is made by which the brother may release

himself from the obligation, not, however, without submitting to a ceremony by which he was made an object of contempt. This was absolutely necessary to guard against brothers endeavouring to put off their obligation on mere flimsy grounds. Similar customs existed among the Persians, Indians, and some Italian tribes, (Diod. Sic. xii. 18); and are still practised by the Gallas in Abyssinia, the Afghans, and by some other nations. (Comp. Benary, DeHebræor. Leviratu). Judah apparently entertained now a superstitious fear that he would lose his third son also, if he gave him to Tamar (v. 11), and put her off with the promise that he would give her Shelah as soon as he was grown up, at the same time ordering her to remain in the meantime in her father's house, as was the custom for widows who had no children (see Lev. xxii. 13), but to consider herself the affianced wife of Shelah. Judah thus prevented her from contracting an alliance with any other person. Tamar did as Judah had requested her, but finding, after waiting in vain for a long time, that Judah did not fulfil his promise, she determined to ensnare her father-in-law himself. The circumstance that the wife of Judah had died, and he was now a widower, favoured her design.

12. *And in process of time, the daughter of Shuah, Judah's wife died: and Judah was comforted, and went up to his sheep-shearing to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.*

"Judah was comforted," that is, he had performed the customary ceremonies of mourning, and the usual time of lamentation for the dead had passed. "And he went up to his sheep-shearing." Sheep-shearing was from the most ancient times attended with great festivities (compare 2 Sam. xiii. 23). It would, therefore, not have been proper for Judah to attend the sheep-shearing during the time of mourning. When Tamar heard of Judah's intention to go up to Timnath—a town in the district of Judah—she seized the opportunity of carrying out her scheme, which, as the sequel shows, proved entirely successful. (See vv. 15-18). About three months after that Judah was informed that his daughter-in-law was with child, and he ordered her to be brought forth and burned. As the head of his family, he had perfect control over the members of the family. This was an exceedingly severe sentence, although being the affianced wife of Shelah, she had actually committed adultery. Under the Mosaic Law the punishment of burning was only inflicted in the case of a priest's daughter. (See Lev. xxi. 9); the usual punishment was stoning. (See Deut. xxii. 23, 24; John viii. 47.) When the sentence was about to be carried out, Tamar sent the signet, the

bracelets, and staff which Judah had given her as a pledge. (v. 18.) The signet-ring was by a silk string suspended from the neck, and worn in the bosom between the two principal garments, and was highly prized, the utmost care being taken that it may not be lost. The signet-ring in Scripture is regarded as a symbol of affection and faithfulness, (see Cant. viii. 6); as the image of Divine love, (see Jer. xii. 24); and denotes election and elevation, hence the beautiful simile, Haggai ii. 23: "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of Hosts." According to Herodotus, it was indispensably worn by the ancient Babylonians. (Herod. i. 195.) The device upon the signet ring varied according to the different nations. The bestowal of the seal empowered the person who received it to transact business for the donor. (See Esther iii. 10.) When the King appointed a viceroy he gave to that dignitary his ring or signet. (See Esther viii. 2.) According to Herodotus, the staff which was ornamented with some device, was in the hand of every Babylonian. (Herod. i. 165.) Tamar bore to Judah two sons, Perez, denoting *a breach*, and Zerah, denoting *splendour*; from the former descended King David in a direct line.

The critics of the so-called "higher school of criticism" strenuously maintain that there is a discrepancy in the chronology of this chapter, which is altogether irreconcilable. Bishop Colenso reproduced the arguments of the German neological writers in his book on "the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua, pp. 60, 61, 62." The alleged discrepancy, it is maintained, consists in the *time* that elapsed between the selling of Joseph and the immigration of Jacob into Egypt being *too short*, amounting only to *twenty-two years*, for all the events as stated in the narrative to have taken place. Joseph, according to ch. xxxvii. 2, was *seventeen years old* when he was sold by his brothers; according to ch. xli. 46, he was *thirty years old* when he stood before Pharaoh, that is *thirteen years* after he was brought into Egypt, if we now add the *seven years* of plenty, and *two years* of the famine, at the end of which Jacob descended into Egypt, (comp. ch. xlv. 6, *et seq.*) we have the *twenty-two years* as stated above. Now during the *twenty-two years*, the following events transpired: Judah married the daughter of Shuah by whom he had three sons; two of these, Er and Onan also married; Judah afterwards had two sons, Perez and Zerah, by his daughter-in-law; and the former according to ch. xli. 12, had also two sons, Hezron and Hamul at the time when the family of Jacob went down to Egypt. It is maintained that it is impossible for all these events to have taken place in *twenty-two years*, and that

therefore "one of the two accounts must be untrue." Here again the opponents of Scripture have evidently merely taken a cursory view of the subject, for if we look into it more closely, we will find that there is no absolute necessity for supposing all the events to have taken place in the twenty-two years. The alleged discrepancy may be reconciled in two ways, namely, either by supposing that Hezron and Hamul, the sons of Perez, were born in Egypt after Jacob's immigration, or that the events recorded in chapter xxxviii. took place some years before the selling of Joseph, either of these two suppositions will effectually remove the difficulty if they can be substantiated. Let us see. It will probably be urged against the first proposition that Hezron and Hamul are distinctly enumerated among the seventy persons (including Jacob himself and Joseph and his two sons) who came down to Egypt with the patriarch. (ch. xlv. 27.) In reply to this objection it may however be said, that the design of the sacred writer evidently was to give the number of Jacob's family living at the time of his death, in order to show the wonderful increase of the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. Hence we read in Exod. i. 5: "And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls," and in verse 7: "And the children of Jacob were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them." (Comp. also Deut. x. 22.) The occurrence of the names of Hezron and Hamul in the genealogical account of Jacob's family, does not necessarily imply that they went with him into Egypt. Indeed it is very doubtful whether the four sons of Reuben given in the list had all been born at the time of the descent into Egypt, for we read in Genesis xlii. 37: "And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him (Benjamin) not unto thee"; from which it would appear that at that time he had only two sons, or he would not have limited the offer to that number. The same may be said as regards some of the sons of Benjamin: he is constantly represented as a young man (see Gen. xliii. 8, 29; xlv. 20, 30, 31), that one can hardly conceive that he should at that time have had already ten sons, when at the most he could only have been twenty-four years old. Bishop Colenso laid much stress upon the expression: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, were threescore and six"; but we have already on several occasions pointed out that the term "all" is frequently used in Scripture—as it is often with us—in a limited sense, referring often only to the greatest part of the things spoken of. That such is clearly the case here, is quite evident from ch. xlv. 27, where it is said that "כָּל (col) all the souls of the house of

Jacob which came into Egypt were threescore and ten"; but in this number are included Joseph and his two sons, who were there already—the two latter, indeed, were born there. As regards the second proposition, that the events related in our chapter may have taken place some years before Joseph was sold into Egypt, we may observe that the expression; "And it came to pass at that time," (v. 1), may be taken in a larger sense, referring to some time after Jacob's return from Mesopotamia. The acute Rabbinic writer, Aben-Ezra, has pointed out that the phrase "at that time," is sometimes used in an indefinite sense, referring to occurrences which had taken place many years ago, as for example, Deut. x. 7, it is said: "From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah," and in verse 8, the sacred writer goes on to say: "At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD," which, however, according to Num. iii. 6, had taken place thirty-eight years before. Le Clark, also shows that the expressions "then"—"at that time"—"in those days," must be taken sometimes with considerable latitude of meaning. From the foregoing remarks the reader will now perceive that the statement in the Mosaic narrative does not involve a manifest contradiction as the opponents of Scripture so pertinaciously persist in, but that, on the contrary, it admits of ready and satisfactory solution.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1. *And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.*

As the history of Joseph has been interrupted by the introduction of some incidents in the family history of Judah; the sacred historian, on resuming the narrative again, repeats therefore some of the chief features which had been already mentioned. It is here expressly stated that Potiphar was *אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם* (*ish mitsrayim*) an Egyptian man, as there was a great admixture of Arabians among the population of Heliopolis from very remote times (Plin. vi. 34).

2. *And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

The Egyptians held those who followed the occupation of shepherds in great contempt, Joseph would, therefore, have

remained a slave in the house of his master, if God had not been with him, and made all his undertakings to prosper. Without Divine intervention, there would have been no chance of his finding favour in the eyes of the Egyptian grandee. But the extraordinary success which attended all that Joseph did, soon attracted the attention of Potiphar, who at once recognized in it a supernatural power, looking upon his servant probably as one of those favoured human beings who according to the doctrine of fatalism, were believed not only to be successful in all they undertook to do, but also to spread prosperity around them. Potiphar was not slow in taking advantage of the circumstance, and "made Joseph overseer over his house, and all that he had he gave into his hand." (v. 4.) It is necessary to observe, that it must not be inferred from the words: "And his master saw that the LORD was with him" (v. 3), that Potiphar had any knowledge of Jehovah, this could hardly be expected from an Egyptian idolater: he certainly recognized a supernatural power in Joseph's success, but it is the sacred historian who ascribes it to its true source, and not Potiphar.

5. *And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.*

Although Potiphar was an officer of high rank in the army, he also had landed property. In ancient times each Egyptian soldier received twelve *auroras of land free from all charge and tribute; officers would of course obtain more according to their rank. The free gift of land to the soldiers was founded upon the principle that the owners of the soil are most interested in the safety and welfare of the country. The gift of land would also induce many to join the army, as in time of peace they were allowed to attend to their land. Furthermore, no civil authority had the power of arresting and imprisoning a soldier for debt. The Egyptian army being so very numerous, will account for Pharaoh being able, in such a short interval, to collect and pursue the Israelites with so large an army.

6. *And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he cared for nothing that was with him, save the bread which he ate: and Joseph was beautiful of form, and beautiful of appearance.*

In the Authorized as well as the Revised Versions, the words וְלֹא יָדַע אֵת (velo yada itto), are rendered, "he knew not

*The aurora was a square of land containing 10,000 cubits or 15,000 feet.

aught *that was with him*," but it cannot for a moment be supposed that Potiphar did not know what he possessed. The meaning evidently is, that he did not *care* or *trouble himself* about anything that belonged to him; he gave Joseph entire and unrestricted control over all his possessions. The verb יָדַע (*yada*) to know, is, in other places, used in the sense to *care for*, to *regard*, to *see after*. Thus Job says: "I am innocent; לֹא אֲדַע (*lo eda*), I regard not my life," (ch. ix. 21.) So, also, Prov. ix. 13.

"A foolish woman is clamorous;

. She is simple רַבֵּל יֹדְעָה מָה (*uval yadeah mah*), and cares for nothing."

The rendering in the Authorized and Revised Versions, "she knoweth nothing," affords but a feeble sense. "Save the bread which he ate," that is, Potiphar had given Joseph full control over his domestic affairs; but as the food of the Egyptians differed from that of the Hebrews, (see ch. xliii. 32.) he was not allowed to interfere in any way with what came upon his master's table.

7. *And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, lie with me.*

The immoral proposal of Potiphar's wife, as set forth in our verse, is quite in accordance with what is said of the conjugal faithlessness that prevailed among the Egyptian women. It is related that Pheron, the son of the famous Egyptian monarch Sesostris, searched for a long time to find a woman who had remained faithful to her husband; and when he at last found one, he burned the faithless women in the town of Erytrebolus as a terrible example. (Herod. ii. 111.) Joseph's moral principles were, however, too firmly implanted to listen to the persistent solicitations of his master's wife, and represented to her that it would be base ingratitude towards his master, who had placed such implicit confidence in him as to entrust him with all he possessed, as well as sinning against God. "Behold," he said, "my master careth not about what *is* with me in the house, and he hath given all that he hath into my hand. There is none greater in this house than I; nor hath he withheld anything from me, but thee, because thou *art* his wife; how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (vv. 8, 9.) When the faithless wife saw that her pressing solicitations were of no avail, and fearing lest her husband would hear of her shameful conduct, she adroitly threw the blame upon him for having introduced a young Hebrew servant into the house to assail her honour, "And she called to the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought a Hebr

unto us to mock us." (v. 14.) And when her husband came home, and she repeated her concocted story to him, she said, "The Hebrew servant whom thou hast brought to us, came in to me to mock me." (v. 17.) This portion of the sacred narrative has also been enlisted by our modern adverse critics in their endeavours to impugn the truthfulness of the Mosaic narrative. They strenuously insist upon, "that from the well-known strict seclusion of Oriental women in their harems, and the great care that is taken in watching those places, it was utterly impossible for Joseph to come into contact with his mistress, as is stated in the narrative. Now, if it could be satisfactorily established, that this cruel practice of shutting up women in their harems, and setting watches over them, already existed in those ancient times, the veracity, not only of this portion of Scripture, but of many others, would indeed be severely shaken; but we have, on the contrary, unquestionable proofs that such was not the case. Every ordinary reader of the Bible cannot have failed to perceive, that from the beginning to the end there is not a single instance of such a custom of secluding women in their harems, as is now commonly practised among orientals, but they are, on the contrary, constantly represented as enjoying perfect freedom, and even taking part in some of the public and religious ceremonials. Among the Chaldeans also, it appears from Dan. v. 2, 3, that women were not excluded from the society of men, but were permitted to sit with them in the banqueting hall. But it will perhaps be urged, that the non-existing of such a custom among the Hebrews and Chaldeans does by no means prove that it did not prevail among the Egyptians; it will, therefore, be incumbent on us to show that, although it is now a deeply rooted custom among them, it was not so in ancient times. The testimony which we are able to adduce is of the most unquestionable kind, for it is the direct testimony of the ancient Egyptians themselves, who, although more than three thousand years have passed away, still speak to us through their monuments, and testify that the women in Egypt enjoyed even greater freedom than the women in Greece. Taylor says: "In some entertainments we find ladies and gentlemen of a party in different rooms, but in others, we find them in the same apartment, mingling together with all the social freedom of modern Europeans. The children were allowed the same liberty as the women, instead of being shut up in the harem, as is now usual in the East, they were introduced into the company, and were permitted to sit by the mother, or on their father's knee." (*Taylor's Illustrations of the Bible from the Monuments of Egypt*, p. 171.)

On a monument from Thebes, and now in the British Museum, there is depicted a party of guests entertained with music and dance. Men and women are seen seated together at the feast; there is another group of women singing and clapping their hands to the sound of the double pipe; and besides these, there are two dancing girls. On another monument from Thebes, and now also in the British Museum, is depicted an Egyptian dinner. There we see a maid-servant presenting a cup of wine to a lady and gentleman seated on chairs; another holding a vase of ointment, and a garland before other guests, and another female attendant offers wine to another guest: in her left hand is a napkin, for wiping the mouth after drinking. The tables are furnished with bread, meat, geese, and other birds, figs, baskets of grapes, flowers, and other things. Beneath the tables are seen glass bottles of wine. Wood-cuts of the monuments above referred to, are given by Wilkinson in his work entitled, "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," in the second volume, pages 390 and 393. In speaking of a party, Wilkinson also observes: "At an Egyptian party, the men and women were frequently entertained separately in a different part of the same room, at the upper end of which the master and mistress of the house sat close together on two chairs, or on a large fauteuil; each guest as he arrived presented himself to receive their congratulatory welcome, and the dancers and the musicians hired for the occasion, did obeisance before them previous to the performance of their part. To the leg of the fauteuil a favourite monkey, dog, gazelle, or some other pet animal was tied, and a young child was permitted to sit on the ground at the side of its mother, or on the father's knee. In some instances we find men and women sitting together, both strangers, as well as members of the same family, a privilege not conceded to females among the Greeks, except with their relatives. And this not only argues the great advancement in civilization, especially in an Eastern nation, but proves, like many other Eastern customs, how far this people excelled the Greeks in the habits of social life." (Vol ii, pp. 388, 389.) Surely such unquestionable testimony as we have above adduced, must satisfy every unbiased and impartial reader, that the objection raised by modern critics in respect to the impossibility of Joseph coming into contact with his master's wife, according to the prevailing customs in the East, is altogether groundless. Our remarks on the subject will also sufficiently show how careful persons should be in allowing themselves to be influenced by any arguments they may read or hear advanced to impugn the truthfulness of any Biblical statement. The arguments, in all cases are put forward in the most convincing manner, so that those who are not able to con-

trovert them, stand in great danger of being carried away by them. Persons hearing or reading such arguments should therefore always endeavour to find out whether there is any possibility of reconciling the apparent discrepancies. The objections raised against the portion of the narrative representing Joseph as being able so easily to fall in with his master's wife would, no doubt, by most readers be regarded as a very plausible objection, for taking into consideration the present custom in the East, such an occurrence would be highly improbable if not, indeed, impossible. And when we see this objection brought forward by so many eminent writers, we can hardly wonder that many should be influenced; and yet, it will be seen, how completely the truthfulness of the narrative may be sustained.

19. *And when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake to him, saying, 'After this manner did thy servant to me, his anger was kindled.*

20. *And Joseph's master took him, and put him into prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound; and he was there in the prison.*

Joseph no doubt pleaded his innocence of the charge brought against him; yet it was quite natural that Potiphar would rather believe his wife's statement, than anything that the servant would say in his defence. We can also readily understand that such an assertion against his steward in whom he had placed the highest confidence, would arouse the most intense anger. And yet Potiphar, by no means, inflicted such a severe punishment as was generally imposed for such a crime, probably taking Joseph's long and faithful services into account, he "put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound (or imprisoned.)" The verb *אסר* (*asar*), to bind, is sometimes used in the sense to *imprison* without fettering, as was the case with the butler and baker, who were merely put into custody in the same prison where Joseph was incarcerated. Still, it appears from Psalms cv. 18, that Joseph was at least for a time bound, "his feet they hurt with fetters."

The expression *בית הסהר* (*beth hassohar*) which we have rendered "prison," literally denotes *round house*, and was probably so called from its *circular form*. Prisons of this form are still to be seen in some parts of Europe. The prison was attached to the house of the captain of the guard, but there was an officer who had supervision of the prison and prisoners, called *סר בית הסהר* (*sar beth hassohar*) *captain or governor of the prison*, (v. 21). The mercy of God which had lightened

Joseph's affliction when sold to Potiphar by giving him favour in the eyes of his master, now followed him also into the place of his confinement. God inclined the heart of the governor of the prison to treat Joseph with kindness.

22. *And the governor of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.*

"Whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it," that is, whatever they did, was by his direction, or immediate supervision. We have already stated that, according to Scripture language, a person that orders a thing to be done, is said to be the doer of it.

CHAPTER XL

1. *And it happened after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt, and his baker offended against their lord, the king of Egypt.*

All the occurrences that transpired since Joseph had dreamed his dreams seem to render the realization of the dreams apparently impossible. He was now not only far removed from his father and brothers who, according to the dreams, were to make obeisance to him, but he was even incarcerated in an Egyptian prison. Instead of the greatness which the dreams portended, he was now a slave to an Egyptian grandee. And yet, by Divine direction, every occurrence as it took place was a step nearer to their accomplishment. During Joseph's imprisonment, it so happened, that the chief butler and chief baker—for such was their actual office, according to verse 2—offended against their lord the king of Egypt, and they were placed in the same prison where Joseph was confined.

4. *And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; and they remained some time in the ward.*

Although it had already been stated in verse 22 of the preceding chapter that all the prisoners were given in Joseph's charge, yet it is in our verse distinctly stated that the two officers of the royal household were also placed under Joseph's care, "and he served them," that is, he saw or directed that they were properly cared for, not that he necessarily himself attended to them. It happened that both the butler and the baker dreamt a dream on the same night, and when Joseph

visited them in the morning, he perceived that they were greatly dejected, and on asking them "Why is your face so sad to-day?" (v. 7), they replied that they had dreamt a dream, and that there was no one who is able to interpret it (v. 7). Their dejection and anxiety to have the dream interpreted, shows that they were impressed with the idea that the dream was of momentous import. "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (v. 8), as much as to say, it is folly to look for the interpretation of dreams to the wise men and magicians, as is the practice among you, the foretelling of future occurrences, belongs to God only. He wished them to understand, also, that by declaring to them the import of the dreams, he lays no claim to any personal merit, or to the possession of superior wisdom, but that it was God who enabled him to do so.

9. *And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, in my dream, behold a vine was before me;*

10. *And on the vine were three branches; and it was as if it budded; and its blossoms shot forth; and its clusters matured ripe grapes;*

11. *And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.*

The dream plainly suggested the restoration of the butler to his butlership, but whether the three "branches" represented three days, or three months, or three years, no human sagacity could have divined, and that knowledge could only have been imparted by Him from Whom nothing is hid. Our modern adverse critics, upon the authority of Herodotus, who states that in Egypt the vine was not cultivated (ii. 77); and upon the statement of Plutarch, that the kings of Egypt previous to *Psammaticus were altogether forbidden to drink wine (Isis, 6), have not hesitated to question the accuracy of this portion of the sacred narrative. But these statements have been proved to be entirely erroneous, both from ancient Egyptian monuments and ancient writers. According to Champollion, "representations of the culture of the vine, the vintage, the stripping off the grapes, the carrying away the bunches of grapes, the two kinds of presses, one moved with the hands, and the other by mechanical power, the putting up the wine in jars, the removing it into the cellar, the preparation of boiled wine, are seen depicted on monuments of the earliest dynasties found in the grottoes of "Beni Hassan," a village of Upper

* Psammaticus, is the name of three kings of Egypt of the 26th dynasty. The most notable of these three kings was the son of Necho I., who, according to the Egyptian historian Manetho, reigned 54 years. He died about 610 B. C.

Egypt on the east bank of the Nile, and celebrated for the numerous interesting grottoes in its vicinity. Rosellini observes: "Numerous are the representations in the tombs, which relate to the cultivation of the vine, and these are found not merely in the tombs of the time of the 18th and some later dynasties, but also in those which belong to the time of the most ancient dynasties." (Vol. ii. 1, p. 365, *et seq.*) And, at page 373, he remarks: "The described pictures show more decidedly than any ancient written testimony, that in Egypt, even in the most ancient times, the vine was cultivated and wine made." Seven different kinds of wine of Lower and Upper Egypt are represented in the inscriptions of the times of the Pharaohs. Wilkinson, too, gives the engraving and description of an ancient vineyard, and the different kinds of labour bestowed on it. In a painting of Thebes, "boys are seen chasing away the birds from the clusters of grapes." (Vol. ii. p. 143, *et seq.*) These proofs from the ancient monuments show that the statement of Herodotus that, "the vine was not cultivated in Egypt" is altogether incorrect. Indeed, Herodotus himself states that "dried grapes appear among the things which are placed in the body of the bullock offered to Isis, together with bread, honey, &c. Diodorus goes so far as to attribute to the Egyptian deity Osiris, the discovery of the cultivation of the vine. Athenæus, born at Naucratis in Egypt, and who flourished at the end of the second century, states in his work *Deipnosophista*, (Banquet of the Learned) i. 61, that the first vine was discovered in the Egyptian town Plinthinus; and the philosopher Dion, speaks of the Egyptians as fond of wine and of drinking. It is also well known that the vine flourishes in Egypt in the water like an aquatic plant, and consequently does not suffer from the inundations of the Nile. With such direct testimony before them as to the cultivation of the vine in Egypt from the most ancient times, it is certainly quite unaccountable, that those adverse critics should have allowed themselves to be influenced by the mere statement of a few Greek writers.

After Joseph had interpreted the butler's dream, and gladdened his heart with the hope of a speedy release from imprisonment, he entreated him, that when he was restored to his former office, he would also show him a kindness, and bring him to the notice of Pharaoh, that he might be brought out of this dungeon. In order to enlist more readily the sympathy of the butler, he informed him, that he had indeed been stolen from the land of the Hebrews, and that here also he had given no cause for being placed in confinement. (v. 14.) But the butler in his prosperous state altogether forgot his former fellow prisoner, although the very act of handing the wine cup

to the king, should have reminded him of the interpretation of his dream. Joseph might justly say that he was indeed stolen, for he had been abducted by force by his brothers without the knowledge of his father.

16. *When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favourable, he said to Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three baskets of white bread on my head.*

17. *And in the uppermost basket, there was all kind of food for Pharaoh: the work of the baker; and the birds ate them out of the basket upon my head.*

The favorable interpretation of the butler's dream, encouraged the baker to tell his dream also. The adjective טוב (tov), good, is evidently here used in the sense of *favourable*, for the chief baker could not have known whether the interpretation was good until it had been accomplished. The words סלי חרי (salle chori) have been rendered in two different ways. Some understand, by the expression, "three baskets of white bread," whilst others understand it to denote "three white baskets." The former rendering is adopted by most of the ancient versions. Thus the Targum has "three baskets of the best bread;" the Septuagint "three baskets of fine bread;" the Vulgate, "three baskets of fine flour;" and so the Revised Version "three baskets of white bread." It will be seen as the word *bread* is printed in italics, it is not in the original, and hence many of the Rabbinic commentators have rendered merely "three white baskets," namely, such as are made of twigs, and are white when the bark is peeled off. This rendering is adopted in the Authorized Version, and favoured by the context, for in verse 17 it is said, that in the upper basket was all kind of food for Pharaoh the work of the baker," which seems to imply that the two lower ones were empty. We may here also state, that the art of making confectionery apparently obtained great attention among the ancient Egyptians. The various operations which the art involves are delineated with great minuteness on many monuments. We see there, how the flour was sifted, how the pastry was worked, either with the hands or feet, how seeds were sprinkled upon the pastry, how the pastry was mixed with other ingredients, and sometimes made in the shape of an ox, a sheep, a fish, a star, or some other favorite object. (See Wilkinson, vol. ii. p. 384-388; also Rosellini ii. 464.) Indeed, the ancient Egyptians made bread and pastry the chief article of food, and hence they were by the Greeks called ἀροφάγοι *bread eaters*. Burdens were, by the Egyptian men, borne on the head, whilst the women carried them on their shoulders. (See Herodotus 2, 25.) Joseph's interpreta-

tions of the dreams were literally fulfilled. The third day being Pharaoh's birthday, he restored the butler to his former office, whilst the baker he hanged. We learn from our narrative that the celebration of the birthday is of great antiquity; it was afterwards kept as a day of joy and feasting among most eastern nations.

CHAPTER XLI.

1. *And it came to pass at the end of two full years that Pharaoh dreamt: and, behold, he was standing by the river.*

Pharaoh's dreams are the last step towards the fulfilment of Joseph's greatness. "At the end of two full years," that is, most probably from the time when Joseph had interpreted the dreams of the two officers, Pharaoh dreamed, that he was standing by the river Nile. The word here used in the original for "river," is יַעֲר (ye'or) and is an Egyptian word denoting the flowing river. As in many parts of Egypt, rain never, or at least very rarely falls, the fertility of the soil entirely depends upon the annual overflowing of the river, and hence the Nile is spoken of as "the rival of the clouds." Its waters are conducted into distant parts of the country, by extensive canals, spoken of in Isaiah xiv. 18, as "the rivers of Egypt." As the river Nile is the principal source of the great fertility of the country, it was made the object of veneration, and a great festival was annually celebrated in its honour. Some writers consider that there is still a trace of the abundant years in Joseph's time to be found in the marks left by the highest rise of the river in each year at Senne. (See Osburn, *Israel in Egypt*, p. 63.)

2. *And, behold, there came up out of the river seven cows, fine in appearance and fat in flesh; and they fed in the Nile-grass.*

3. *And, behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, bad in appearance and lean in flesh; and they stood by the other cows upon the bank of the river.*

4. *And the cows bad in appearance and lean in flesh, devoured the seven cows fine in appearance and fat. And Pharaoh awoke.*

The term אֲחוּ (Achu) (v. 2) rendered in the Authorized Version "a meadow," is a purely Egyptian word denoting the reed or

marsh-grass which so abundantly grows on the banks of the river Nile. The word occurs only again in Job. viii. 2.

"Can the papyrus grow up without mire?
Can the reed-grass grow without water?"

In this passage the Authorized Version has rendered the word by "flag." The circumstance that both the fat and lean cows came out of the Nile, has reference to the fact that the fertility of the land entirely depends upon this stream, and that as soon as it fails, famine is sure to be the consequence. It is also important to observe here, that the Egyptians regarded the cow as the symbol of the earth and of fertility. Clemens Alexandrinus, observes: "The cow is the symbol of the earth and its cultivation, and of food." (Strom. B. V. p. 671.) Plutarch also remarks: "They (the Egyptians) consider the cow as the image (*i. e.*, the symbol) of Isis, and the earth." Isis is the goddess of the earth and of fertility. Pharaoh, therefore, although he could not divine the whole import of the dream, yet could not fail to perceive that it must have reference to the produce of the field upon which the prosperity of the country depends. This would naturally increase his anxiety to learn the full meaning of the dream, "and in the morning his spirit was troubled," (v. 8). Hengstenberg has very pertinently remarked: "It is scarcely conceivable that a foreign inventor should have confined himself so closely to the peculiar Egyptian symbols."

5. *And he slept and dreamt a second time; and, behold, seven ears of corn came up on one stalk, rank and good.*

6. *And, behold, seven ears thin and blasted by the east wind sprung up after them.*

7. *And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.*

That Pharaoh dreamed a second dream in the same night of the same import as the first dream, Joseph afterwards interpreted to signify that the thing is established by God, and God will speedily bring it to pass (v. 32). In this dream instead of the symbols of fertility, the produce of the earth itself is employed. The full ears and the thin and blasted ears very appropriately represent *plenty* and *dearth*. By the "seven ears of corn on one stalk," we cannot fail to perceive a reference to the famous Egyptian wheat, *Triticum compositum* or *many-eared wheat*, so extensively cultivated in the Valley of the Nile, and furnishing one of the principal means of subsistence to the rich and poor. The "seven thin ears," are said to have been "blasted by the east wind"; a wind which blows

from the Desert of Shur and the Desert of Paran, it is so hot, that it destroys vegetation in a very short time. (Comp. Ezek. xix. 12; Hos. xiii. 15). The dreams left a deep impression on the mind of Pharaoh that they foreboded some important events, and "his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the soothsayers of Egypt, and all her wise-men" (v. 8), but they were not able to interpret them. The fact that Pharaoh at once summoned *all* the magicians and wise-men of Egypt, forcibly shews his great anxiety to find out the meaning of the dream. The Hebrew term for *Magicians* חֲרָטִימִים (*chartummim*) has been derived in different ways. Some derive it from חָרַר (*chur*) to *explain* and טָמַן (*tum*) (equivalent to טָמַן (*taman*) to *conceal*, hence persons who profess to be able to explain or make known mysterious things. This affords a very appropriate derivation. Others regard it as merely another form of the Egyptian word *Erthom*, a *performer of miraculous deeds*. More commonly, however, the word is regarded as a contraction of חָרַט (*charat*) to *engrave, to write*, and חָרָם (*charam*) to *be sacred*, so that the word would denote *sacred scribes*, corresponding to the Greek *ἱερογγραμματοῖς*. Whatever may be the proper derivation of the word, certain it is, that the persons denoted by it were of the priestly cast, and professed to be able to foretell events, interpret dreams, and to be learned in all the arts and sciences of the Egyptians. They were held in great esteem, and much reliance placed upon their declarations. Thus, for example, in cases of severe sickness, a sacred scribe was called in with the doctor, who from a book of astrological signs decided whether the patient would recover or not.

The butler seeing that none of the wise men were able to interpret the dreams, and that the king was greatly troubled, and impatient to find out their meaning, he seized the opportunity to ingratiate himself still more in his royal master's favour by informing him, how a Hebrew servant of the captain of the guard had interpreted his and the chief baker's dreams, and that it came to pass just as he had explained them. We cannot credit the butler with having been actuated by a desire to render Joseph a good service in return for having interpreted his dream, for he had, during the past two years, ample opportunity to bring him to the notice of the king. Pharaoh at once sent for Joseph. "And they hastened to bring him out of the dungeon" (v. 14). Before presenting himself before the king, "he shaved *himself*, and changed his garments" (v. 14). Joseph in shaving himself before coming in the presence of the king, followed the custom of the country. Herodotus mentions as one of the distinguishing peculiarities of the Egyptians, that

they allowed their beards to grow only in mourning, but that ordinarily they always shaved. Wilkinson says: "So particular were they on this point, that to have neglected it was a subject of reproach and ridicule; and whenever they intended to convey the idea of a man of low condition, or a slovenly person, the artist represented him with a beard." (Vol. III. p. 357). The Hebrews, on the contrary, cultivated the beard with great care, and often swore by it, and looked upon its mutilation as an extreme ignominy. (Comp. 2 Sam. x. 4, 5.) In mourning, however, they shaved their beards and hair. (Comp. Is. xv. 2; Jer. xli. 5). When Pharaoh told Joseph he had heard it said of him that he was able to interpret dreams, Joseph, as on a former occasion, disclaimed all ability to be able to do so of himself: "Not I," he said, "God will answer for the peace of Pharaoh"; as much as to say, I trust God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace. The king in relating his dreams to Joseph, stated them more fully than they were given in the beginning of the chapter; he mentions, in addition, that the lean cows were such as he had never seen in all the land of Egypt for badness, and that when they had consumed the fat cows, their appearance remained as bad as at the beginning (vv. 19-21). It was important that Pharaoh should be very precise in relating his dreams; the addition indicated, that the seven years of famine were to be so great that "all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will consume the land" (v. 30). After the king had finished relating his dreams, he added, "and I told *this* to the magicians; but *there was* none who could declare it to me" (v. 24). When, many centuries after this, the wise men and magicians of Babylon were unable to tell and interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he commanded them to be put to death, and their houses to be made a dung-hill. Pharaoh acted differently; he merely declared the incompetency of the wise men and magicians of Egypt. Joseph seized every opportunity to endeavour to lead the king to the knowledge of God. Before commencing to interpret the dream, he impressed upon Pharaoh that "God hath shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do" (v. 25). After he had partly interpreted the dream, he again tells the king: "This *is* the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh: What God *is* about to do he hath shown to Pharaoh" (v. 28); thereby impressing upon the king, that what he hath spoken was revealed to him by God. Joseph seeing the necessity of proper steps being taken during the seven years of plenty, in order to save the people from starving during the seven years of terrible famine, ventured of his own accord to advise the king what would, under the circumstances, be best to do to avert as much as possible the suffering from want of food. He most likely feared also that the king might be influ-

enced by his counsellors to make light of the matter. He therefore counselled Pharaoh to look out an intelligent and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt, and also to appoint officers over the land in the seven years of plenty, whose duty should be to take up the tenth part in the land, and to gather all the food of those good years, and lay it up in the cities. The object of this was to prevent the people from selling the produce into foreign countries. That Joseph gave the counsel without any selfish motives cannot, for a moment, be doubted. As a perfect stranger in the country, and a purchased servant, having that very day been brought out of the prison where he had been confined for an alleged misconduct, the thought of aspiring to such a high office and trust as he advised the king to establish, could never have entered his mind. But Pharaoh was satisfied that Joseph had given him the right interpretation of his dreams, and as all the wise men and magicians of Egypt had been unable to explain them, he felt now convinced that the Hebrew youth could not have discovered the meaning of the dreams by his own sagacity. The advice, too, which he gave him, was so judicious as to prove him to be endowed with extraordinary wisdom. We can therefore readily understand that, under the circumstances, the king would be eager to obtain the services of Joseph, seeing he was "a man in whom the spirit of God is" (v. 38). As Pharaoh was an idolater, it is a question whether אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) would not be more suitably rendered by *gods* in the foregoing passage. This rendering is favoured by several parallel passages in Daniel. Thus, in chapter v. 11, the queen says to Belshazzar: "There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is רוּחַ אֱלֹהִין (*ruach Elahin*), "the spirit of the gods." And so again, in verse 14, Belshazzar says to Daniel: "I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee." אֱלֹהִין (*Elahin*) is only the Chaldee form of the Hebrew term אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*). If, however, Pharaoh used the term אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*) in reference to the true God, then he must have accepted Joseph's statements, that it was God who had enabled him to interpret the dreams, and that it was God who hath shown to Pharaoh what He was about to do.

41. *And Pharaoh said to Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*

42. *And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain round his neck.*

The office to which Joseph was appointed was next to the king in power and dignity. He became, in fact, the viceroy of

Egypt, and all the people were implicitly to obey him. As he now represented the king in all public transactions, he received the royal signet, which gave validity to the documents to which it was affixed. In the east no documents are signed, but the names and titles are engraven on signet-rings; hence, in giving the seal to a person, is, in fact, investing him with one's own power. Thus Ahasuerus, in like manner, "took his ring from his hand, and gave it to Haman" (Esth. iii. 10). When he afterwards installed Mordecai in the office of prime minister in the place of Haman, he "took off the ring, which he hath taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai" (ch. viii. 2.); and in verse 8, it is distinctly stated, that "the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse." In the middle ages the investiture by a ring to a high office of state was still quite common. We can, therefore, readily understand that the loss of a seal was quite a calamity. Fortunately, the seals had, besides the name, also the date engraven upon them, so that a person who lost his seal could have another engraved with the new date, and acquaint his correspondents with the fact. As seals were easily counterfeited, the punishment for such a crime was very severe; in Egypt it was punished with the loss of both hands. The seal-engraver was also obliged to keep a register for every seal he made, and if he had been discovered to have duplicated exactly a seal, he would have forfeited his life. The "vestures of fine linen," Hebrew בִּגְדֵי שֶׁשׁ (*bigde shesh*)—rendered in the Septuagint *στολην βυσσινη robe or stole of bysse*—were of the finest fabric, and exquisite white, and worn only as a mark of rank by the priests and kings. These garments were by the Egyptians considered as pure and holy. (See Herod. ii. 37; Plin. xix. 2). The wearing of a gold chain round the neck was also a mark of rank and eminence, the ordinary people seldom wore such an ornament. The chains were of different form, according to rank. On the tombs of Beni Hassan are pictorial representations of slaves, each bearing in his hands an article of ornament or dress belonging to his master. The first slave bears the gold chain or necklace.

43. *And he made him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they called out before him, Bow down; and he placed him over all the land of Egypt.*

The grand-vizier, when attending the king on public occasions, rode in a second carriage after the king. Pharaoh in publicly proclaiming Joseph as grand-vizier of Egypt, made him ride in the carriage used by that high dignitary, and heralds going before the chariot proclaimed his dignity by ordering

the people to "bow down." The procession was no doubt attended with all oriental pomp. The term* אַבְרֶךָ (*avrech*) "bow down," is, no doubt, an Egyptian word denoting *bow the head, or let every one bow down!*

44. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I am Pharaoh; but without thee no man shall lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh seems desirous to impress upon Joseph, that although he was king, and as such the absolute ruler of the land, yet he invested him with full and complete power to rule his people. "Without thee no man shall lift up his hand or foot," a proverbial expression, meaning that he should have absolute control of everything.

45. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath Paneach; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On.

Pharaoh still more shewed his gratitude for the service which Joseph had rendered him, by bestowing upon him a new name expressive of the service he rendered the king and the country. He called his name צַפְנַת פַּנְעָה (*Zaphenath paneach*), which all Jewish writers regard as of Hebrew origin, deriving צַפְנַת (*zaphenath*) from צָפַן (*zaphan*), to hide, and פַּנְעָה (*paneach*), from פָּעַן (*paän*) to reveal, hence *revealer of secrets*. This meaning of the name has been adopted also by Theodoret, Chrysostom, and many modern commentators. Most modern critics following Jerome, regard the name as of Egyptian origin, denoting *saviour or deliverer of the world*. Or, as some render it, *the salvation of the world or empire*. (See Jablonski, Op. I. 207-216; Rosellini, *Monum.* I. 183.) Gesenius gives the meaning *the preserver of the world*. (Thes. pp. 1181, 1182), all these different meanings are appropriate. Pharaoh bestowed yet another honour upon Joseph, by giving him the daughter of the priest of On to wife. By this alliance he became related to one of the noblest and most influential families of the

* Most of the ancient translators have regarded אַבְרֶךָ (*avrech*) as a Hebrew word, in that case it would be an irregular form for הַבְרֶךָ (*havrech*); similar irregular forms sometimes occur. Thus Jer. xxv. 3, we have אֲשַׁכֶּם (*aschem*) for הַשְׁכֶּם (*hashchem*). Or it may be regarded as a Chaldee form. Some of the ancient translators have taken the word as if compounded of אב (*av*) father and רַךְ (*rech*) mild, i. e. *mild father* or *gentle ruler*. But this derivation is very far fetched, and as we have above stated, the word is without doubt an Egyptian word.

country. The power of the chief priest was very great: his office was hereditary in his family, and his statue, like that of the king, was set up in the temple. "On" was situated on the east side of the Nile in the land of Goshen, about five miles from modern Cairo. It is, in Ezek. xxx. 17, called "Aven;" the Greeks gave it the name Heliopolis, *i. e., city of the sun*, and the Hebrews called it Beth Shemesh, *i. e., house of the sun*. There is only a column of granite seventy feet high covered with hieroglyphics remaining of its former grandeur. Many will feel inclined to blame Joseph for marrying an idolatrous wife, but they should consider that in yielding to the wishes of Pharaoh, he may have hoped to bring his wife to the knowledge of the true God. He had the example of his own mother before him, who was also the daughter of an idolater, but who was brought to the knowledge of God by his father. We have an instance of a similar marriage in the case of Moses marrying the daughter of Jethro, priest of Midian.

46. *And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh King of Egypt; and Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout the land of Egypt.*

As Joseph was seventeen years old when sold by his brothers, it follows that he was thirteen years a slave, three of which at least he passed in the prison. He had now been raised to the highest office which lay in the power of the king to confer; but the office in this case involved uncommon responsibilities.

47. *And in the seven years of plenty the earth brought forth handfuls, (i. e. in great abundance).*

The immense increase of Egyptian corn, obtained some time ago a complete confirmation in a curious manner. In the year 1849, five grains of wheat which had been found in an Egyptian tomb were sown in France, and it is stated to have given a yield of 1200 for 1. Some few years later comparative experiments were made in different localities in France, and the result was, that the Egyptian corn roughly sown in one-half of the field gave a yield of sixty to one, while the ordinary French corn in the other half of the field produced only fifteen for one. It is further said, when the Egyptian grain was sown one by one in a line, it produced upwards of five hundred to one. Many travellers speak of the great yield of the Egyptian wheat even at the present time. Mr. Jowett, in his "Christian Researches," observes: "We counted the number of stalks which sprouted from single grains of seed, carefully pulling to pieces each root, in order to see that it was

one plant. The first had seven stalks; the next three; then eighteen; then fourteen. Each stalk would bear an ear."

49. *And Joseph stored up grain as the sand of the sea, very much, until he ceased numbering; for it was without number.*

"Until he ceased numbering"; that is, keeping any further account of the immense quantity of grain that was brought into the storehouses. The Egyptians were very fond of keeping records of almost everything. On many monuments there is to be seen a person with writing materials engaged in writing down something. In the tomb of Amenemhe, at Beni Hassan, there is a pictorial representation of a great storehouse, with a large heap of grain lying before the door. A man fills a measure in order to pour it into sacks to be carried to the storehouse. The carrier lays down the sack before an officer, and near him is the measure with which it is to be measured, and a registrar takes an account of it. In a tomb at Elethya there is also a man represented who is apparently engaged in taking an account of what another man measures. Other men carry it in sacks to the storehouse. These remarks will throw light upon the above passage.

Before the years of famine came, Joseph had two sons born to him. His first-born he called מְנַשֶּׁה (*Menashsheh*) Menasseh, *i. e.* *causing to forget*: "For, said he, God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house" (v. 51). Joseph recognized the hand of God in all that had happened to him, and now on the birth of his first son, he gave him a name expressive of his gratitude to the Almighty for the happy change in his condition, which in a measure made him to forget all the misery he had experienced through so many years. During the long period of servitude in a strange land, the happy days he had passed in his father's house would naturally constantly recur to his mind, and the thought of the kindnesses which a loving father had showered upon him, would ever be in his memory, and tend to make him feel his condition more severely; but now, when his adversity was changed to prosperity, and he himself was in the enjoyment of his own home, the memory of his father's house did no longer occupy his mind to the extent as it had done before. In this sense must Joseph's statement, "God hath made me forget all my father's house," be taken, and not that he had entirely forgotten his loved home. The second son he called אֶפְרַיִם (*Ephrayim*) Ephraim, *i. e.*, *double fruitfulness*. Although Joseph, as far as we possess any information, had only these two sons, yet through them he obtained afterwards a numerous progeny, especially through Ephraim.

Hence, Jacob, in bestowing his blessing upon Joseph, prophetically declared :

" Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by the well ;
His branches spread over the wall."—(Ch. xlix. 22.)

When the seven years of plenty were ended, the seven years of famine immediately followed. The famine, according to our narrative, was not confined to Egypt, but extended also to other countries. But through the wise provision which Joseph had made, there was bread in all the land of Egypt. But when the famine began to make itself felt, and "all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread;" but the king having placed the entire government of the country in the hands of Joseph, and being convinced that in this critical state of the land its administration demanded the soundest judgment, he commanded the people to go to Joseph, and act according to his advice.

56. *And the famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses in which there was corn, and sold it to the Egyptians : and the famine became great in the land of Egypt.*

It is doubtful whether by the statement "over all the face of the earth," are to be understood the neighbouring countries as Nubia, Arabia, Canaan, and Syria, certainly not the whole world, or whether the words *על כל־פני הארץ* (*al kol pene haärets*) are to be rendered "over all the face of the land," i. e., Egypt. The word *ארץ* (*erets*) denotes both *the earth*, and also *a land, a country*, and sometimes collectively, *countries*, as in verse 57, "And all *הארץ* ("haärets") the countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn." Egypt has frequently been visited with fearful famines. The famines may have been caused by a deficiency in the increase in the waters of the Nile, or by a too great inundation of it, which is equally destructive. Macrizi has written a whole volume on the famines with which Egypt was visited from time to time; and history furnishes some fearful accounts of suffering caused by some of those famines. The Arabian writer, Abdollatif Jbn Jusuf, in his comprehensive work on Egypt, relates that in the year 1190, the river Nile rose to almost an unprecedented height, and the consequence was a fearful famine. The sufferings of the people were indescribably great, so much so indeed, that parents consumed their children, and human flesh became a common article of food, which they prepared in various ways. Man-catching became an ordinary business. The greater part of the population were swept away. The

following year, the inundation did not reach its proper height, and only the low lands were overflowed, and much of those parts which were inundated could not be sown for want of labourers and seed, and much was destroyed by worms which devoured the seed corn, also of the seed which escaped this destruction, a great part produced only meagre shoots which perished." An equally severe famine is mentioned by Macrizi as having taken place about a century before, in which the Calif himself nearly perished with hunger. (Hengstenberg; De Sacy.) We have given the above accounts in order to show more forcibly the wisdom and importance of the steps which Joseph took to alleviate the sufferings of the Egyptians as much as possible during the fearful years of famine. Some of the adverse critics have not hesitated to charge "the author" with ignorance of the natural condition of Egypt, in stating that the famine extended also to the neighbouring countries which owe their productiveness to rain-falls, whilst the productiveness of Egypt entirely depends upon the overflowing of the Nile. (See Von Bohlen Comt. on Gens. p. 421.) But here again our adverse critics have evidently made the charge, without giving the subject a proper and impartial examination. It is an established fact that the inundations of the Nile are occasioned by the tropical rains which fall upon the Abyssinian mountains. It is also well known these rains have the same origin with those of Palestine. "It is now decided," says Le Père, "that the Nile owes its increase to the violent rains which proceed from the clouds that are formed upon the Mediterranean Sea, and carried so far by the winds, which annually, at nearly the same time blow from the north." There are not wanting also other examples of years of dearth which were common in Egypt with the adjoining countries. Thus Macrizi describes "a famine which took place in Egypt, on account of the deficiency in the increase of the Nile, in the year of the Hejira, 444, which at the same time extended over Syria and even Bagdad." (See Le Père Descr. p. 573; *Reise nach Mekka* i. p. 835; Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Desert*, pp. 35, 36.) Our adverse critics to the sign of the fundamental truth, that with the Almighty nothing is impossible, and that the accomplishment of His purposes does not depend upon natural means.

CHAPTER XLII.

1. *And Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt; and Jacob said to his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?*

"And Jacob saw," that is, he *heard* or *learned* by having obtained information to that effect. The verb רָאָה (*ra'ah*) to see, is often used in the sense to learn, to understand. Thus Eccl. i. 16, "my heart רָאָה (*ra'ah*) hath seen much wisdom," i. e., hath learned much wisdom. "Why do ye look upon one another," i. e., why do ye thus stand gazing upon one another in such an undecided and helpless manner? Some critics have charged Joseph with unfilial conduct in not informing his aged father of his advancement in Egypt; and on taking a mere cursory view of his action, it certainly appears strange that he should have neglected to do so, when he must have been well aware that his father, who loved him so dearly, must have experienced great grief at the loss of him. But when we come to examine the subject more closely, we soon discover that it was not from want of filial affection that he withheld from his father the information, but that, on the contrary, there were cogent reasons for his acting as he did. Let us see. Joseph had dreamed two dreams, both clearly foreboding his future greatness. Everything that subsequently happened to him, distinctly tended to bring about the realization of his dreams. He felt, therefore, that all these occurrences were brought about by the interference of Divine Providence, and that he was merely the instrument for the accomplishment of God's purpose. By Divine guidance of affairs, he had now become viceroy of Egypt, and there was nothing more wanting for the complete accomplishment of the dreams than the homage which his family was to pay him, and this he felt satisfied would also be brought about in God's own way, and at the proper time. Then again, if Joseph had informed his father of his abode in Egypt, and of the great dignity conferred upon him, he would have been compelled to disclose the wicked conduct of his brothers towards him. To hear such a terrible accusation, would have intensely aggravated the grief and pain which his brothers inflicted upon their aged father by their former evil conduct. As an affectionate son he wished to spare his father this additional anguish, and rather trust to God to bring about what still was wanting to complete the realization of the dreams. We contend, therefore, that under the circumstances, Joseph's conduct was rather praiseworthy than blamable. At the request of Jacob ten of his sons went down to Egypt, Benjamin alone remaining with his father, he being the

youngest and the full brother of Joseph, and the only remaining son of his beloved wife Rachel, he entertained an especial fondness for him, and fearing lest any evil might befall him on the way, he would not allow him to accompany his brothers. The sons of Jacob came to Egypt among other strangers who came to buy corn.

6. *And Joseph was the governor over the land, and it was he that sold to all the people of the land; and Joseph's brothers came, and prostrated themselves before him with their faces to the ground.*

The Hebrew word for "ruler," in our verse is, שָׁלִיט (shallit) one who has dominion, from which is derived the Chaldee word שְׁלֹטָן (sholtan); and the Arabic and Turkish word Sultan, the title of the supreme ruler of the Ottoman empire. "And it was he that sold to all the people of the land;" that is, the selling was made under his direct supervision. "And Joseph's brothers came and prostrated themselves before him, with their faces to the ground;" here then we have the literal fulfilment of Joseph's dreams as far as his brothers are concerned; they reverentially bow down before the ruler of the land, and thus unwittingly fulfil the dreams at which they had scoffed, and on account of which they had conceived such an intense hatred against their brother. Joseph knew his brothers as soon as he saw them, but they did not recognize him; they had now not seen him for twenty years, during which time his countenance would have undergone some change, and besides this, he had become quite Egyptianized, having shaved his beard, for as we have already stated, the Egyptians allow only their beard to grow in mourning. His dress appertaining to his high office would also contribute to alter his appearance.

9. *And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamt of them, and said unto them, ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.*

"And Joseph remembered the dreams," seeing his brothers prostrated before him, he perceived in the act a literal fulfilment of his dreams. "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land;" that is, to spy out the unprotected parts of the country. This accusation was quite a natural one, as Egypt for a very long time had been exposed to hostile attacks from the east and north-east, his brothers would therefore hardly be surprised at the accusation. The answer which the brothers gave to the charge was such as would most likely prove satisfactory, "We are," they said, "all one man's sons," (v. 11), and therefore not likely to enter upon such a hazardous undertak-

ing, which, if discovered, would deprive the father of all his children. It will probably be said, that Joseph ought to have acted more magnanimously towards his brothers than he did, but Joseph evidently wished to find out whether their character had changed for the better, and perhaps more particularly, whether they entertained any jealousy also towards their father's favourite son Benjamin. He persisted, therefore, in charging them with being spies. "Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come" (v. 12.) In order to convince the ruler of the truth of what they had stated before, they now give a more precise description of their family.

13. *And they said Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan ; and, behold, the youngest is this day with his father, and one is no more.*

The information that his father was still alive, and that his brother Benjamin is now with him, which accounted for his not being present with them, must have been exceeding joyful tidings to Joseph. The statement afforded him an opportunity to discover whether they entertained any jealousy towards their youngest brother, their father's cherished favourite. He persisted therefore, in his accusations that they were spies.

14. *And Joseph said to them, That is it that I spake to you, saying, Ye are spies.*

As much as to say, your own statement proves that what I have said to you is true. Your father knows the danger of your enterprise, and therefore would not allow the youngest son to accompany you.

15. *Hereby shall ye be proved : by the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go forth hence, except your younger brother come hither.*

"By the life of Pharaoh," among the eastern nations, it was, and still is, the common custom to swear by *the head, the heart, or the life of the king*. The eastern people regarded their monarch not only as being all powerful, but as possessing also divine authority. Among the Hebrews the usual oaths were, "*As the LORD liveth*," or "*by the help of the LORD*," or "*as thy soul liveth*." Only in addressing the king himself they swore by the king. (Comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 55 ; 2 Sam. ii. 11.) Joseph proposed now to them that they should send one of themselves home and bring their brother, that their statement might be verified. To this proposal they apparently would not agree, and we can readily understand that none of them would be willing to go home alone to their father, and induce him to send

Benjamin, whilst the rest were kept in prison in Egypt. He therefore "put them all together into ward three days." In adopting this apparently harsh treatment, he may have had two objects in view; in the first place to give them an opportunity to consult together what would be best to do under the circumstances, for it will be seen, "he put them all together"; and, secondly, he may have hoped this trouble would awaken in them a sense of their wicked conduct towards him. And such was actually the case, for according to verse 21, "they said one to another, We *are* verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

18. *And Joseph said unto them on the third day, This do and live; for I fear God.*

"This do and live," it is, by doing as I say, you may escape the punishment inflicted upon spies. "For I fear God"; Joseph evidently added this, to assure them that it was his earnest desire to deal justly with them, and that they need not fear any unjust or cruel treatment at his hands. He now greatly modified his demand by requiring only one of them to remain as a hostage. To this proposal the brothers seemed to have readily agreed, and he took Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. But it may be asked why just Simeon? The answer is no doubt to be found in the prominent part that Simeon took in the selling of Joseph. He had on a former occasion, in the affair at Shechem, proved that he was capable of the most atrocious wickedness, and from his being now singled out we may reasonably infer that he took a prominent part in the selling of Joseph. When Joseph heard his brothers reproaching one another for the barbarous conduct towards him, he was greatly moved by their expression of contrition, and to prevent premature discovery, he turned away from them and wept. After having regained control over his feelings, he returned to his brothers and conversed with them, and having taken Simeon from them, and bound him before their eyes, to be retained as a hostage, he permitted the others to depart. He had, however, given orders that their vessels should be filled with corn, and that every man's money should be restored into his sack, and also that they be provided with provision for the journey. The brothers now started on their way home, their asses laden with corn. When they arrived at the first "halting-place," and on one of them opening his sack to give his ass provender, he found his money "in the mouth of his sack," and when he mentioned the circumstance to his brothers, "their hearts failed them," or as the original more forcibly

expresses it **וַיֵּצֵא לִבָּם** (*vaiyetse libbam*) "their heart went out." They seem to have had two kinds of sacks, one for the corn called **כֶּלִי** (*keli*, v. 25); and the other for provender called **אֲמָתָחַת** (*amtachath*, v. 27). It was in the latter that the money was found, it was evidently placed on purpose in the sacks containing the provender, so that it may be found before they reached home, as they had no occasion to open the sacks containing the corn. When they came home they told their father all that happened to them in Egypt, how the lord of the country had taken them for spies, and insisted upon their bringing their youngest brother as a proof of their being true men. That if they brought their brother, Simeon would be delivered to them, and they might then also freely traffic in the land (v. 34.)

35. *And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, and behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid.*

The brothers knew they had paid for the corn, they would therefore naturally conclude that their money had been placed in their sacks for the purpose of bringing some other accusation against them. Under these circumstances Jacob had little hope of having Simeon again restored to him, and in the anguish of his heart exclaimed, "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all this cometh upon me" (36).

37. *And Reuben said to his father, saying, Thou mayest slay my two sons, if I do not bring him to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.*

Reuben who had done his utmost to frustrate the wicked design of his brothers against Joseph, and to restore him to his father, now exerts himself also to the utmost to save Simeon. He goes even so far as to offer his two sons as guarantees for the safe return of Benjamin. The rash statement, "Thou mayest slay my two sons," must of course be regarded as having been uttered under the influence of an excited mind, and is not to be understood in the literal sense, but rather as expressing his great anxiety to save the life of Simeon, and the lives of his whole family, for they certainly could not appear in the presence of the ruler of the land again without bringing Benjamin. In a similar manner Jacob in the anxiety to free his household from the imputation of having stolen Laban's images, used the rash language, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live" (Gen. xxxi. 32). Jacob did not listen to Reuben's earnest entreaties.

38. *And he said, My son shall not go down with you ; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone to me ; if mischief befall him by the way in which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to (שָׂאוֹל sheol) hades.*

When Jacob said "he is left alone," he meant of the sons of his beloved wife Rachel, for the other brothers were his sons as well as Benjamin, though born of different mothers.

CHAPTER XLIII.

1. *And the famine was sore in the land.*

The famine continued to afflict the land of Canaan, so that no food could be obtained in that country, there remained therefore, no alternative but to look to Egypt for a further supply.

2. *And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food.*

"When they had eaten up the corn," that is, when their corn had become nearly exhausted, for it is not likely they would wait until it had been entirely consumed, since the journey to Egypt and back would occupy some time. We have on several occasions pointed out that *a great portion* of anything is often spoken of as *a whole*. As Reuben had failed to obtain the consent for Benjamin to accompany them, Judah now represented in more forcible language to his father the utter impossibility of appearing before the ruler of the land without Benjamin, for "The man solemnly protested to us, saying, ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you." When Judah tells his father that, "The man solemnly protested," he refers to Joseph's oath, "by the life of Pharaoh," (ch. xlii. 15). Jacob reproached his sons for having told the ruler that they had yet another brother, but they justified themselves by saying, that "The man asked us closely about ourselves and about our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother?" We were therefore bound to tell the truth. Besides, "could we indeed have known that he would say, Bring your brother down?" (v. 7.)

Joseph did not indeed directly ask them about their family at home, but when he charged them with being spies, they gave the information in order to show that it is not likely that a

father would allow all of his sons but one to enter upon such a dangerous undertaking. When Judah saw that his father still hesitated to give his consent, he implored his father to send the lad, that they might live and not perish. "I will be surety for him": he pleads, "of my hand thou mayest demand him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then will I have sinned against thee for ever (vv. 8, 9). Judah's earnest entreaties at last prevailed, Jacob consented to let Benjamin go, and charged them to take double money with them, and also some of the choicest products of the country, (Heb. מִזְמֶרֶת הָאָרֶץ *mizzimrath haarets*, i. e., of the praised of the

land), as a present to the ruler. Three of the articles which they were to take as a present, namely, "balsam, tragacanth, and ladanum," are the same as those mentioned in ch. xxxvii. 25, which the Ishmaelites were taking as merchandize into Egypt, and of these we have already given an explanation. Besides these they were also to take "honey, nuts, and almonds" (v. 11). "Honey" is, in Hebrew, called דֶּבֶשׁ (*devash*), it denotes both *bee-honey*, (see Jud. xiv. 8) and a syrup boiled from the grapes, by the Arabians called *Dibs*, and also *the syrup of dates*. Modern travellers often mention the great number of bees still found in Palestine, and they were no doubt far more plentiful in ancient times when the land was under general cultivation. Yet when the land of Canaan is spoken of as a land "flowing with milk and honey," *the syrup honey* is no doubt included. "Nuts." The word occurs in Scripture only in this place. The Hebrew term here used is בֹּטְנִים (*botnim*) by which is no doubt meant the *pistachio-nut*, found wild in Palestine, but is more common in Syria, especially in the cooler parts. The pistachio-nuts are either eaten uncooked, or fried with pepper and salt. They are much relished both by the Orientals and Europeans on account of their spicy taste, and highly valued, as the kernel was supposed to possess the property of a tonic, also to be a specific against the bite of serpents, (Comp. Plin. xiii. 10). The pistachio-tree resembles very much the *terebinth*. "And almonds"; the almond-tree is, in Hebrew, called שִׁקְדָּה (*shakad*), *the waker*, as this tree above all other trees awakes the earliest from its winter repose. In Ecc. xii. 5, the profuse *white flowers* of the almond-tree are beautifully compared to the hoary head of the old man. It has been asked, how Jacob could send these productions, when the land was so sorely afflicted with famine and dearth. But all the productions mentioned were such as would keep for years, and may have been stored up from previous years.

We must not omit here to offer a word of praise for the respectful and considerate manner with which both Reuben

and Judah pleaded with their aged father. They uttered not a word of reproach for his making such a distinction between the children of Rachel and his other children. They did not remind him that as their common father the lives of all should be equally precious to him, but merely represented to him, that their lives would be endangered in appearing again in the presence of the ruler without their brother Benjamin. On the other hand, we are bound to say, that Jacob's persistent refusal to let Benjamin go was, under the circumstances, highly blameable. One of his sons was held as a hostage, whose life might have been endangered by withholding his consent. Nay, more, his whole family was placed in danger of perishing by famine. In his conduct he again displayed human infirmity, instead of putting his trust in God who had so often delivered him out of trouble. When Jacob, however, at last gave his consent, he offered up the devout prayer: "And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send your other brother and Benjamin," and then with a full resignation to the Will of God, added, "and I, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved" (v. 14); as much as to say, if it is the Will of God that I lose my children, His Will must be done. So Esther, before venturing unbidden in the presence of the king, exclaimed, "If I perish, I perish." (Esther iv. 16).

The brothers arrived in Egypt without any mishap having befallen them on the way, and no doubt anxious to release their brother from confinement, immediately presented themselves before the ruler, to convince him that they had stated the truth. When Joseph saw Benjamin, he ordered his steward to bring the men to his house, and prepare a meal; for they were to dine with him at noon. As the narrative does not record anything to have been said either by Joseph or his brothers on this occasion, we may take it for granted that no conversation took place. Joseph probably fearing not being able to control his emotions at the sudden sight of Benjamin, ordered his brothers to be instantly taken to his house, which would give him time to compose himself before he met his brothers at dinner time. The brothers, naturally looked upon their being taken to the ruler's house, as an omen of coming evil, and said: "On account of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time we are brought in; that he may throw himself upon us;" or, as the original more forcibly expresses it, לַהֲתַגְלֵל עָלֵינוּ (*lehithgolel alenu*) "to roll himself upon us," i. e., crush us like a stone rolling over anything; "and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses." (v. 18.) The brothers, therefore, before they entered the house, took the precaution to speak to the steward "at the door of the house," that it was altogether unaccountable to them how

their money got into their sacks; that they first discovered it when they came to the halting place on opening their sacks, and that they now brought the money back again, besides other money to buy more corn. This was very judicious on the part of the brothers, for after this open declaration they could not well be accused of having designedly gone away without paying for their corn. The steward at once quieted their fears by telling them that he had received their money, and that it was their God who had given them their treasure. (v. 23.) The statement of the steward, "your God and the God of your father," may be accounted for; that although he may not have known that they were his master's brothers, yet he knew that they were his countrymen. It is also quite probable that Joseph, in order to carry out his plan successfully, may have informed the steward, and instructed him how to act. The steward set their minds further at ease by bringing Simeon out of prison, and restoring him to his brothers. As this could have been done only by the order of the ruler, they would naturally conclude that he was now perfectly satisfied; and that they had nothing more to fear from him. Still they must have wondered why they should have been singled out from the many strangers that had come to buy corn, to have the great honour conferred upon them as to be invited to dine with the viceroy of the land. The steward now brought them into Joseph's house, "and gave them water, and they washed their feet," according to the common custom in the Eastern countries, and he also gave provender to their asses. When Joseph came home, they presented him with the presents they had brought for him, bowing themselves at the same time to the earth. Joseph now asked after the welfare of their aged father of whom they had spoken, and they reverentially answered: "Thy servant our father is well." This affability on the part of the viceroy must have entirely banished any fear which may have made them feel uneasy. At the sight of Benjamin, Joseph was no longer able to control his emotions, and fearing the plan which he had devised might be frustrated before it was entirely carried out, he hastened away into his private chamber, and wept. After a while he returned again, and ordered the table to be set.

32. *And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians who were eating with him, by themselves: for the Egyptians cannot eat food with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.*

In the disposition of the guests at this entertainment, Joseph strictly adhered to the customs of the country. The Egyptians cherished a great dislike to strangers, and on no account would

they eat with them at the same table. Herodotus speaks of the Egyptians abstaining from familiar intercourse with foreigners, because they looked upon them as unclean, since they killed and ate the animals which were held as sacred among the Egyptians. The same author further remarks, that since the Egyptians show great reverence to cows which are sacred to Isis, no Egyptian man or woman will kiss a Greek upon the mouth, or use a knife, or fork, or kettle of a Greek, and will not even eat any flesh of a clean beast, if it has been cut up with a Greek knife (ii. 41). Although the Egyptians who dined with Joseph were no doubt men of high rank, yet as they probably did not belong to the same *caste* as Joseph who by his marriage with the daughter of the priest of On belonged to the *caste of priests*, they ate at a separate table, for the same spirit of caste prevailed among the Egyptians as among the Hindoos.

33. *And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birth-right, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.*

In every particular the Egyptian custom was strictly adhered to. The ancient Hebrews, like many other eastern nations, reclined during their meals (see ch. xviii. 4), but the Egyptians, although they had couches, are always represented as sitting at table. And so we find the brothers here sitting before Joseph. But what must not a little have astonished the brothers was, they having their seats assigned to them according to their age; no wonder, indeed, that they "marvelled one at another." They must have come to the conclusion, either that he knew them, or that he was a diviner. The object of Joseph placing his brothers in this manner is not quite clear, but most likely it was to make himself appear in the sight of his brothers as being endowed with extraordinary gifts.

34. *And he took and sent portions to them from before him: but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.*

Joseph, in accordance with the ancient custom of the East, in order to show his regard for his guests, sent portions to his brothers from his own table. This custom still prevails if the master of the house wishes to do special honour to his guest. Many travellers speak of this mark of regard having been shown to them by their hosts. The sending of a larger portion at a meal to a guest, was a common mode of showing preference or conferring a distinguishing mark of honour. It was practised not only among the ancient Hebrews, but also among

other ancient nations. (Comp. 1 Sam. ix. 23, 24. Hom. Odyss. iv. 65, 66; xiv. 437. Iliad vii. 321.) Joseph probably sent this large portion to Benjamin, as it would naturally be noticed by the other brothers, and wished to see, whether this special mark of honour would arouse any jealousy in them.

CHAPTER XLIV.

1. *And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.*

2. *And put my cup, the silver cup, into the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did in accordance with the word that Joseph had spoken.*

The preference and mark of honor shewn to Benjamin at the meal by a much larger portion being sent to him than to the other brothers apparently did not arouse any jealousy amongst them. Joseph now had recourse to the well devised scheme recorded in the above passage in order to test their temper, and see what their conduct would be, if Benjamin was placed in danger. It appears that the brothers did not only dine with Joseph at noon, but remained in his house until the following morning, when he sent them away early at daybreak on their journey homeward. But soon after they had departed, and before they had time to go any distance from the city, he ordered his steward to pursue them, and when he had overtaken them to say to them, "Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this *it* in which my lord drinketh, and whereby he indeed divineth? Ye have done evil in what ye did," (vv. 4, 5). It is a well established fact that the ancient Egyptians practised a mode of divination by means of a cup. This mode of divination was carried on even to a greater extent among the Persians. Jamblicus, in his work on the Mysteries of the Egyptians, says, that future events were foretold by means of certain figures reflected by the rays of light in clear water, (Lib. iii. sect. 14). Another mode of foretelling future events, or for obtaining any particular information was, by throwing small pieces of gold or silver, together with precious stones, on which were marked certain strange figures into a cup, and over which certain incantations were repeated, and the evil demon invoked. The answer was expected to be given either in intelligible words, or by

some signs appearing on the surface of the water, or by the appearance of the image of the person about whom enquiries were made, or by some other mysterious way. Sometimes melted wax was thrown into a goblet filled with water, and the answer inferred from the forms which the wax assumed. (See Cornelius Agrippa, *de Occulta Philosophia*, Lib. I. cap. 57).

This superstitious practice of divining by a cup still exists in Egypt and Nubia. Norden, in his *Travels*, relates, that when he and his companions had arrived at Derri in Nubia, where they were able to deliver themselves from a perilous condition only through great presence of mind, they sent one of their company to a powerful and malicious Arab, to threaten him. He answered them: "I know what sort of people you are. I have consulted my cup, and found in it that you are from a people of whom our prophets had said: There will come Franks of every kind of pretence to spy out the land. They will bring a great multitude of their countrymen to conquer the country, and to destroy all the people." (Vol. viii., p. 68. Quoted by Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Books of Moses*, p. 39). It must not be inferred from the words, "and whereby he indeed divineth," that Joseph actually practised divination, he had merely recourse to this device to accomplish a certain purpose. We have stated that Joseph wanted to test his brethren, how they would act towards Benjamin if placed in a dangerous position, and the words were therefore intended to impress upon them that by stealing the cup they had committed a very great crime, as it was a sacred vessel, by which secret things could be discovered, and was therefore of great value to Joseph. Some of the ancient versions have added, "why did you steal the cup"; for which there is no authority, and is not at all required. The brothers repelled the charge of the steward with indignation. "Wherefore saith my lord these words? Far be it from thy servants that they should do according to this thing" (v. 7). They reminded him, that the money which they had found in their sacks they had again brought back, that it was therefore not likely that they would steal from his master's house either silver or gold. And in order to convince him that they felt perfectly innocent of the charge laid against them, they themselves declared that not only should he die with whom the cup was found, but all would be willing to become slaves to his master. The steward, however, excepted their proposal only so far as to have their sacks searched, but did not deem it in accordance with justice that all should be punished, or that even he with whom the cup was found should suffer death, the one who has committed the theft, he alone "shall be my servant, but ye shall be blameless" (v. 10). The brothers, confident to be able to establish their innocence,

"hastened and took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack" (v. 11). The steward then commenced his search, beginning with the eldest and finishing with the youngest. As he himself had put the cup into Benjamin's sack, he might have saved himself the trouble to search so many sacks by beginning with the youngest, but this might have aroused some suspicion in the minds of the brothers, that he himself had put it there, or that it was done by his order, he, therefore, for appearance sake, began with the eldest. Great indeed must have been the astonishment of the brothers as one sack after another was opened, and each one's purchase money was again found in the mouth of his sack; but who can picture to himself their consternation when the cup was discovered in Benjamin's sack? Though no expressions of grief are recorded, yet their feeling on this trying occasion may be inferred from their action, "they rent their clothes," an act indicating the greatest grief, and practised only at the death of a near relative. (Comp. ch. xxxvii. 34). As their money had also been placed in their sacks, they could come to no other conclusion, but that the cup had likewise been designedly put in Benjamin's sack, but for what reason it was impossible for them to conjecture. They acted, however, as innocent men would act, facing a false accusation boldly. They at once loaded their asses again, and returned to the city.

14. *And Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house; and he was still there; and they fell before him to the ground.*

As Judah had persuaded his father to let Benjamin accompany them, and had become surety for his safe return, he is particularly mentioned as the leader of his brothers. When they arrived at Joseph's house, "he was still there," having probably remained at home on purpose, expecting their return. The brothers fell down before him entreating for mercy.

15. *And Joseph said to them, What deed is this that ye have done? Did ye not know, that such a man as I can certainly divine?*

We must not interpret Joseph's words as claiming to be a diviner, but having successfully interpreted dreams, he had obtained among the Egyptians the reputation of being capable to reveal secret things. "Did ye not know," that is, did you not hear. We have already stated that the verb יָדָע (*yada*) *to know*, is sometimes used in the sense *to learn*, *to know*, from having heard it. Joseph merely avails himself of the reputation he had gained among the people as a diviner to carry out the trial of his brothers. Judah, though perfectly convinced of Benjamin's innocence, did not attempt to deny the charge of

theft, or offer any excuse. How could he well have done so? It was apparently a clear case, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack: how did it get there? He could not say that it must have been designedly placed there, this would criminate the ruler of the land. Well might Judah be at a loss what to say under such harrassing circumstances. "What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we justify ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants;" it is, in having sold our brother, and is now punishing it, "behold we *are* my lord's servants, both we, and *he* in whose hand the cup hath been found" (v. 16).

17. *And he said, Far be it from me that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup hath been found, he shall be my servant: but ye go up in peace to your father.*

Judah's self-imposed punishment, "behold, we *are* my lord's servants," afforded Joseph now an opportunity to bring the test to a close. Far be it from me to act so unjustly as to punish the innocent with the guilty; let him who committed the theft be my servant, but ye return to your home in peace. He would now see what were their feelings towards their father's favourite son, whether they would, without any effort on their part, leave Benjamin to his fate. They, however, stood the test in a highly praiseworthy manner. Judah, who had become surety for the safe return of Benjamin, approached the ruler of the land, and in an address which has been characterized as the most simple, and at the same time the most persuasive piece of oratory that has ever come from the lips of man, pleaded for the liberation of Benjamin. Luther remarked, in regard to Judah's address, "I would, indeed, give very much if I were able to pray to God as well as Judah prays to Joseph here; for it is a perfect specimen of prayer, the true feeling that there should be in prayer." He commenced his address with a humble entreaty that he might be permitted to speak a word to one who is equal to Pharaoh, and who could, therefore, like the king himself, either pardon or condemn (v. 18). He then recapitulates the past incidents, which led to Benjamin having been brought down with them, and dwelling in a most forcible manner on the great difficulty they had experienced in obtaining their aged father's consent to bring him, as he is the child of his old age, and the only one of two sons left him whom a beloved wife had borne to him. He assures the ruler, that the father's life is so bound up in the lad's life, that if he saw on their return, that the lad was not with them, he would die, and they would then be guilty of bringing the gray hairs of their father with sorrow to the grave. He then implores the

ruler, that, as he had become surety for the lad's safe return, to accept him as a substitute.

33. *Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant remain instead of the lad a bondman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren.*

34. *For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.*

If Judah's conduct on previous occasions demanded our severest condemnation, his conduct on the present occasion calls for our highest praise and admiration. He had made himself answerable for Benjamin's safe return, and does not shrink now from making the greatest sacrifice in order to restore him into his father's arms. Had Judah been unmarried, it would have been no small thing to give up liberty for life-long servitude to an Egyptian grandee; but in his case it meant in addition the renouncing of wife, children, and relatives. He nobly offered to relinquish everything that tended to make life happy, rather than witness the grief of his aged father, which would bring him to a premature grave.

CHAPTER XLV.

1. *And Joseph could not refrain himself before all those who stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me: and there stood no man with him, when Joseph made himself known to his brethren.*

The severe test to which Joseph had subjected his brothers was now successfully brought to an end. What unspeakable joy it must have afforded him to find such decided proofs of his brothers' filial affection towards their aged father. The affectionate manner in which they spoke of their father, and their anxiety to shield their brother from harm, could not fail but to convince him of their true conversion, and of their sincere sorrow for the grief they had caused their aged father. Judah's powerful and kind intercession for Benjamin had the immediate effect that Joseph could no longer refrain himself from giving vent to his feelings. But before making himself known to his brothers he ordered the officials and domestics that attended on him to withdraw. This he evidently did that they might not hear the barbarous treatment he had received at their hands, which would only have tended to increase their aversion against foreigners.

2. *And he wept aloud; and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.*

"And he wept aloud," according to the literal rendering of the original, "And he gave forth his voice in weeping," an Oriental mode of expressing *loud weeping*. Thus they would say, "this child is continually giving forth its voice," i. e., *for ever crying*. Joseph wept so loud that the Egyptians outside heard it. "And the house of Pharaoh heard it," that is, the royal family was told of it.

3. *And Joseph said to his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him, for they were troubled before him.*

No sooner had the words, "I am Joseph," escaped his mouth, than he abruptly enquired after his father. He had, indeed, repeatedly heard from his brothers that his father was yet alive; but he would show his brothers that, although he was now second in dignity in Egypt, his filial affection was as great as ever. The brothers could not make an answer to Joseph's affectionate enquiry, for "they were troubled, or, as it may be rendered, "were confounded before him." And well they might be,—they had sold him for a slave into Egypt, and now he stood before them the viceroy of that country.

4. *And Joseph said to his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you; and they came near: and he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.*

Joseph, perceiving the great perplexity of his brothers, endeavours to dispel all doubt and fear from their minds. They had remained standing at a respectful distance from the great man; he now bids them to come nearer, as an assurance of his good will and friendship; and when they had approached nearer, he again assure them that he was Joseph their brother, adding at the same time the circumstance, "whom ye sold into Egypt," not as a reproach, but in confirmation that he was really their brother.

5. *And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.*

Joseph having alluded to the wicked act of his brothers (v. 4), he entreats them now in a kind and affectionate manner that they should not on that account be grieved or angry with themselves, since God had turned it into a means of preserving life. He is evidently anxious to impress this upon them in order to dispel all fear from their minds, and to reassure their

confidence, for, in verses 7 and 8, he repeats more emphatically, "And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God." But we must not interpret Joseph's language that his brothers sold him into bondage by God's direction, for that act cannot possibly be divested of its criminality: he refers rather to God's overruling power, in making good come out of evil.

9 *Hasten ye, and go up to my father, and say to him, Thus said thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not.*

10. *And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast.*

No sooner had Joseph finished to speak the consoling words to his brothers, than he bids them to hasten back to their homes, and tell his father the great things God had done for him. Though Joseph was indebted for his greatness to Pharaoh, yet he felt assured that it was brought about by the direction of God, who endowed him with knowledge and wisdom, and enabled him to interpret the dreams. He, therefore, requests his brothers to tell his father that, "God hath made me lord of all Egypt." The message contained also the earnest and affectionate request, that his aged father with his whole family, and with all their possessions, might without delay, come down to him, so that he might pass the few remaining years of his life near him. Joseph chose for his family's future residence, "the land of Goshen," the most fertile part of Egypt, and especially famous for its rich pastures. The name גֹּשֶׁן (*Goshen*) is apparently of Semitic origin, for it occurs also as the name of a city and its environs in the south of Palestine. (Josh. xiii., 2; 1 Sam. xvii., 8.) As the name is not mentioned by any of the Greek geographers, various opinions existed at one time as to its exact locality. The prevailing opinion, however, at the present time among scholars is, that it was the name of that part of Lower Egypt east of the Pelusian branch of the Nile, comprehending the modern province of Esh-Shurkiyeh. This province answers in every respect to the allusion made to the land of Goshen in Scripture. Jacob and his family dwelling in this province might well be said to be "near Joseph," whether the court of Pharaoh was at Memphis, or what is more probable at Zoan, *i. e.*, *Tanis*, where, according to Psalm lxxvii., 12, the miracles of Moses were performed. When Jacob went down into Egypt, "he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his

face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen." (Gen. xlvii., 28.) And, in verse 29, it is said that Joseph went up to meet his father unto Goshen; this shows that the territory must have been situated between the frontier of Palestine and the residence of Joseph; and points clearly to the province of Esh-Shurkijeh. Dr. Robinson says, "during my stay in Cairo, I made many enquiries respecting this district; to which the uniform reply was, that it was considered as the best province in Egypt." (Bib. Researches, vol. I., p. 78.)

12. *And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.*

From this verse it would appear, that the brothers were still doubtful whether what they had heard and seen was indeed a reality. The unexpected discovery had so taken them by surprise, that they stood in perfect amazement not knowing what to make of the whole affair. In order to dispel their misgivings, Joseph asks them to look at him more particularly and they would then become convinced that it was his mouth that speaketh to them and no other. Even his brother Benjamin, though he was young at the time when Joseph left his home, would not fail to recognize him. Joseph had already by words endeavoured to convince his brothers that he entertained no ill-feelings towards them on account of the barbarous treatment he had received at their hands, but actions express more forcibly the emotions of the heart, he affectionately "kissed all his brothers, and wept upon them." This expression of love seems to have had the effect to remove all fear and doubt from the brothers' minds, for after this they conversed freely with Joseph. When the report of the arrival of Joseph's brothers reached the palace, Pharaoh and his household were greatly pleased, and the king shewed his gratitude for the great services which Joseph had rendered him and his country, by the munificent treatment he extended to his benefactor's family. He requested Joseph to tell his brothers to load their animals, and to return to the land of Canaan, and bring their father and their households into Egypt, that he would give them the best part of the country to dwell in, and that they should eat the best things of the land. But this is not all; the king further commanded that they should take carriages up with them for the more convenient conveyance of their wives and children.

19. *Now thou art commanded, say to thy brethren, this do ye, take you carriages out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.*

The passage is evidently elliptical, the words אמר אל אחיך (emor el achecha) say to thy brothers, must be supplied from

verse 17 to complete the passage, and I have inserted them in italics. "Now thou art commanded;" Pharaoh had indeed placed every thing under the control of Joseph, but he was too conscientious to take undue advantage of the power with which his royal master had invested him. He would not, without direct orders from the King, supply his brothers with carriages. From the circumstance that Pharaoh ordered Joseph's brothers to take carriages up with them to bring their families into Egypt, it would appear, that carriages were not then in use in Palestine, or if in use, they were not so comfortable for travelling as those from Egypt. In Egypt chariots and carriages were in use from the earliest times, as the country, on account of its general flatness, was well adapted to their use. It is by some even supposed that they originated in that country. But as the country became gradually more and more intersected by canals, carriages fell in disuse, and now, according to recent travellers, neither waggons nor carriages are to be seen. And Joseph did as Pharaoh had commanded him, and he gave also to each of his brothers "changes of raiment," according to the custom in oriental countries; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *shekels* of silver, and five changes of raiment. To his father he also sent ten asses laden with the choicest produce of Egypt, and she asses laden with corn, bread, and meat. Before he sent his brothers away, he entreated them "not to fall out by the way," on account of their past conduct towards him. He had observed the agitation of their minds when he made himself known unto them, and he had heard Reuben upbraiding his brothers for not having listened to him when he entreated them not to "sin against the child," and he requests them now to let by-gone be by-gone, and not stir up any ill-feelings among themselves. When the brothers arrived home, and told their father that Joseph was alive, and that he was governor over the land of Egypt, *וַיִּפֶּן לִבּוֹ (waiyaphag libbo)* and his heart remained cold (v. 26), that is, it did not warm up with the joyful news his sons told him, for he did not believe them. The tidings were of such a startling nature, he could not realize that they were actually true. The bloody coat which had been sent to him, was sufficient proof to convince him that Joseph had been torn in pieces by wild animals, but now his sons tell him not only that he was still living, but that he was also viceroy of Egypt. But when his sons told him all that Joseph had said to them, and he saw the presents and the carriages which he had sent him, he could no longer doubt the truth of their report, and his spirit revived, and with a heart overflowing with joy, he exclaimed: "It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go down and see him before I die." (v. 28.)

CHAPTER XLVI.

1. *And Israel journeyed with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.*

As might be expected when the doting father heard, after a lapse of so many years, that his favourite son was still alive, he would lose no time in setting out on his journey, and thus we see, that the declaration, "I will go and see him before I die," which concludes the preceding chapter, is immediately followed in the beginning of this chapter by the statement, "And Israel journeyed with all he had." There is not a word as to any preparation for the journey, nor of any delay for his departure. Leaving Hebron, where he had been dwelling, (see ch. xxxvii. 14), and travelling southward he came to Beer-sheba, which afterwards formed the southern frontier-town of the promised land. Beer-sheba, as we have seen, had already become a consecrated spot by Abraham and Isaac, having offered up sacrifices and prayers in that place, and received the promise of God's favour and protection; and now Jacob, on leaving the territory of Canaan, also offered up sacrifices, and invoked God's blessing and protection. And God answered the devout prayer of the pious patriarch. Appearing to him in the vision of the night He gave him the encouraging and consoling promise, "fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes" (vv. 3, 4). The promise, "and will surely bring thee up *again*," must not be understood to mean that he was to return again alive into the land of Canaan, but that although he would die in a strange country, he would be buried in the promised land. And the promise was literally fulfilled when Joseph brought up the body of his father from Egypt, and buried him in the cave of Machpelah. (See ch. l. 7-13). The promise may, however, in a larger sense refer also to his posterity who were to grow into a "great nation" in Egypt, and whom God would bring up in His appointed time to take possession of the promised land, as He had promised to Abraham, "and in the fourth generation they shall return hither" (ch. xv. 16). God gives Jacob also the consolatory assurance that Joseph would in the hour of his dissolution stand by his bed-side, and perform the sad office of affection and love of closing his eyes when his spirit would have left its mortal habitation. This promise conveyed to Jacob the further assurance that he was not again to be separated from his loved son. Among the ancient Greeks, it appears

likewise to have been considered a happy circumstance to have the eyes closed after death, by a loving relative, especially by an affectionate child.

5. *And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba : and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the waggons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.*

6. *And they took their cattle, and their goods which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him.*

7. *His sons, and his son's sons with him, and his daughters, and his son's daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.*

The narrative does not state how long Jacob remained at Beer-sheba, but we may rest assured that his desire to see Joseph would not permit him to remain longer than was absolutely necessary. Having now attained to the age of 130 years, he was unable to journey on foot, his sons, therefore, carried him with their little ones and wives in the waggons which Pharaoh so very considerably had provided. Among the family of Jacob who went down into Egypt with him are mentioned "his daughters" (v. 7), but as he had only one daughter, Dinah, so far as can be gathered from the narrative, we must take the term *בנות* (*banoth*), as including his daughters-in-law. It is not an uncommon thing among us to speak of a son-in-law and daughter-in-law as *son* and *daughter*. Jacob, however, may have had other daughters, though they are nowhere mentioned, since females are not commonly mentioned unless there is some special reason for it. Thus Serah, the daughter of Asher, is the only one of his sons' daughters mentioned (v. 17), evidently for some special reason, of which, however, the narrative affords no information. In the list of Jacob's family, mentioned in verses 8-28, the sons are arranged according to their mothers, and as the children of the maids were regarded as belonging to their mistresses, the offspring of Zilpah follow those of Leah, and the sons of Bilhah follow those of Rachel. In verse 27 the total number of souls of the house of Jacob that came into Egypt with him is stated to have been "seventy." This number is made up as follows: Of Leah there are given 6 sons, 23 grandsons, 2 great-grandsons (namely, Hezron and Hamul, sons of Pharez, whilst Er and Onan, the sons of Judah, were dead), 1 daughter, Dinah, and their father Jacob, in all *thirty-three souls*. Of Leah's maid Zilpah are mentioned, two sons, eleven grandsons, two great-grandsons, and one daughter, in all *sixteen souls*. Of Rachel's are given two sons, twelve grandsons (of whom, however, according to Num. xxvi. 40, two were great-grandsons, in all *fourteen souls*. Of

Bilhah, Rachel's maid, are named two sons, and five grandsons, in all *seven souls*, making a total of *seventy souls*. Neither the wives of Jacob's sons, nor the daughters of his sons, except Serah the daughter of Asher, are mentioned in the list, which may be accounted for as not being founders of separate houses. The number seventy, is also given in Exod. i. 5; and Deut. x. 22; but the Septuagint gives the number as seventy-five, and so does Stephen, Acts viii. 14, who evidently followed the Septuagint. There is, however, no discrepancy in the two different numbers, for the number seventy-five is made up by adding the five sons of Ephraim and Manasseh, born in Egypt, upon the authority of Chron. vii. 14-20. As regards the discrepancy which the opponents of Scripture discover in the two sons of Pharez being reckoned among the number that went into Egypt with Jacob, though born afterwards in that country, we have already fully explained it in our remarks on chapter xxxviii. (p. 512 *et seq.*) The promise which God made to Jacob: "I will make of thee a great nation" (v. 3) was literally fulfilled in the immense increase of the children of Israel in their land of bondage. In Exod. ch. i. 7, we read: "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and grew exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them." The language, the reader will perceive, implies an unprecedented, we may almost say miraculous, increase; and this circumstance I desire the reader particularly to bear in mind in reading the remarks that follow. Now, according to Exod. xii. 27, the number of the children of Israel that went out of Egypt were "about six hundred thousand (600,000) on foot that were men, besides children." This would imply a population including their wives and children of about 2,000,000 souls. This great increase has not been allowed to go unchallenged by the opponents of Scripture. Indeed, we may safely say that none of the Biblical subjects which had to bear the onslaught of the rationalistic writers, there is none that has been so fiercely assailed as the increase of the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. When half a century ago some German writers disturbed the quiet of the religious world with their attacks upon the Bible, the immense increase of the Israelites in Egypt was evidently considered by them as the sharpest weapon with which to strike the most effective blow at the Scriptures. Since then the attack has been constantly kept up by writers belonging to the rationalistic school in different countries. Bishop Colenso devoted no less than twenty pages in his book, entitled "The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined," in discussing this subject, in which he, however, only followed the footsteps of the neological

writers of the continent of Europe, except that he treated the subject somewhat differently than they did, without however bringing forward any original arguments. And the reader must not suppose that the war-cry is now hushed, for such is really not the case: it is still sent forth, and that by men, too, of no ordinary talents. We will, therefore, carefully and impartially examine the arguments which our adverse critics bring forward on the subject. The first argument advanced against the verity of the sacred narrative is, *that among all the sixty-nine children and grandchildren of Jacob who went down with him into Egypt, only one daughter and one granddaughter are mentioned. That the very numbering of these two among the seventy souls shows that the females were not omitted intentionally.* To this we reply, there is nothing whatever strange in the omission. We have already on several occasions noticed that the sacred writer mentions only such names as are necessary to the full comprehension of the narrative, and we may rest assured that, whenever a female name is given exclusive of others, there existed some reason for it which was well understood then, although it may not appear quite evident to us at this distant period of time. That such was the constant practice, will be seen on comparing other genealogical lists. Thus, among the descendants of Esau (Gen. xxxvi.), only one daughter is mentioned, verse 22. Again, among the hundreds of the sons named in 1 Chron. vi.-ix., there are only two daughters mentioned. So among all the names and genealogies in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, only five names of females occur. Will our opponents say, that in all these cases there were no other females than those who are mentioned? Certainly not, it would be absurd to do so; and there is, therefore, no ground for saying that *the mentioning of only one daughter and one granddaughter in the household of Jacob is only another indication of the unhistorical character of the whole account.* The next argument is a very ingenious one, and is apt to be by many looked upon as being a very forcible one. *The twelve sons of Jacob as appears from the narrative, they argue, had between them fifty-three sons, that is on an average of four and a half each. Now supposing that they increased in this way from generation to generation, then the first generation, that of Kohath, there would be fifty-four males; in the second, that of Amram, 243; in the third, that of Moses and Aaron, 1094; and in the fourth, that of Joshua and Eleazar, 4923; that is, instead of 600,000 men in the prime of life, there could not have been 5,000.*

In order to strengthen their argument, they bring forward some other families, who, as they say, "will give a fairer average,

because they lived at different times during the interval between Jacob's migration into Egypt and the Exodus." The families generally selected are: "Zelophehad, who had five daughters, but no sons (Num. xxvii. 1); Amram had two sons and one daughter (Num. xxvi. 59); Moses had two sons and no daughter (Exod. xviii. 3, 4); Aaron had four sons and no daughter (Exod. xxvi. 60); Izhar, Amram's brother, had three sons (Exod. vi. 21); Uzziel had three sons (Exod. vi. 22); Korah had three sons (Exod. vi. 24); Eleazar had one son (Exod. vi. 25)." In the last four cases it is admitted, that it is impossible to say whether there were any daughters. From these eight families out of many thousands, they endeavour to form an estimate of the increase of the Israelites during a period of 215 years. Now we may justly ask, what would be thought of the account of any statistical writer who calculated the probable increase of the population of some county in England, say from the time of Queen Elizabeth to George III., from a dozen families? It would be absolutely worthless. Having made this calculation, our adverse critics come to the conclusion, "that in order to produce 600,000 fighting men, which implies a population of 2,000,000, we must suppose that each man had 46 children (23 of each sex). As we have stated, the argument is no doubt ingenious, but we will now show, that it crumbles to pieces at the mere touch. In ch. xv. 13-16, God made the solemn declaration to Abraham that his seed should be a stranger in a strange land "four hundred years"; that they should be oppressed, but that they should come out of their land of bondage in "the fourth generation," or in other words, at the end of the four hundred years. But by a singular mode of interpretation our adverse critics will make us believe, that "the four hundred years" commenced when Abraham left Haran, whilst "the fourth generation" is to be reckoned from the going down of Jacob into Egypt. It is hardly credible, that our adverse critics should not have perceived that the two periods mentioned, though expressed in different terms, *are one and the same period*, and, therefore, must commence and end at the same time. The truth is, the Hebrew word דור (*dor*), signifies *a revolving period of time*; hence, *an age, a generation*. In the long-lived patriarchal age, a generation seems to have been computed at 100 years, and thus "the four generations," in verse 16, are equivalent to the "four hundred years in verse 13. At a later period of time, however, the Israelites seemed to have reckoned the duration of a generation, as is now done with us, from 30 to 40 years. Thus, for example, Job xlii. 16, we read, "after this Job lived an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his son's sons, even four generations, *i. e.*, 35 years to a generation; and from certain statements in the book

of Job itself, we may infer that Job must have lived in the period between Abraham and Moses. As the period of life at the time of the Egyptian bondage had become greatly abridged, it is of course necessary to reckon the duration of a generation at from thirty to forty years. If we now allow 31 years for a generation, the 215 years of actual residence of the Israelites in Egypt will give us seven generations, and not four generations, as our adverse critics will have it. Indeed, in Chron. vii. 20-27, we are told Joshua was the tenth in descent from Joseph, so that we here have ten generations within the 215 years bondage. But we are quite content to base our calculation upon seven generations. Now "all the souls of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were three score and ten"; from this number we have to deduct Jacob, his daughter, and granddaughter, which leaves 67 souls. Now, let us suppose that each of those, and their male descendants, had, on an average, four sons and four daughters at the age of thirty—Benjamin had ten sons at that age—and counting seven generations, each of thirty-one years, the total number of souls at the time of the Exodus would be as follows, namely:

	67
	4
1st generation	268
	4
2nd generation	1,072
	4
3rd generation	4,288
	4
4th generation	17,152
	4
5th generation	68,608
	4
6th generation	274,432
	4
7th generation	1,097,728 males.
	1,097,728 females.
Total	2,195,456

These figures, however, take only into account the number of children born up to the age of thirty, and we may reasonably suppose that a great many may have been born after the father had attained that age, which will greatly reduce the

average of four sons and four daughters. But is it not surprising that the increase of the Israelites should prove such a stumbling-block, when we find even instances of greater increase in modern times. An island in the South Sea, first occupied by a few shipwrecked English, in 1589, and discovered by a Dutch vessel, in 1667, is said to have been found peopled after 78 years, by 12,000 souls, all descendants of four mothers. (See Cardinal Wiseman's "Science and Revelation," vol. i., p. 228.) This rate of increase is more than double that which I have assigned to the Israelites in Egypt. In the statistical accounts of modern nations we often meet with instances of rapid and extraordinary increase of population; and, as an example, I may mention here, that in the year 1785 the population of Ireland was estimated on the basis of returns obtained from hearth-money collectors, at a medium of six inhabitants to a house at 2,845,932 and in 1788, Mr. Walter Bushe estimated it from the hearth-money returns and other data, at 4,040,000. (See McCulloch's statistical account of the British Empire, vol. i., p. 436). The table exhibiting the population of the different counties (p. 437), shows also a remarkable increase in some of the counties. It will probably be said, that this increase is owing to an influx of emigrants; Mr. McCulloch does certainly not assign this as one of the causes, but ascribes it chiefly to the splitting up of large estates into small portions, to early marriages, &c. We frequently, too, hear of cases of extensive progeny. I may mention two which have been brought to our notice by some of the public journals. One is that of "Mr. Lemay Deloane, who at his death had a posterity of 225 children and grandchildren." The other is that of "Madam Rosalie Gagne Talbot, who had 17 children, and reckoned at the time of her death an addition of 188 grand and great-grandchildren all alive. Instances of such rapid multiplication are apparently not confined to any particular country. On the monument of the Rev. Dr. Honeywood, Dean of Lincoln, in the Cathedral of that diocese, is the following inscription:

"Here lieth the body of Michael Honeywood, D.D.,
Who was grandchild and one of the
Three hundred and sixty-seven persons
That Mary, the wife of Robert Honeywood Esq.,
Did see before she died,
Lawfully descended from her," &c.

On a monument at Heyden is the following inscription:

"Here lyeth the body of William Stratton, of Paddington,
Who had by his first wife twenty-eight children,
And by a second seventeen;
Own father to forty-five,
Grandfather to eighty-six,
Great-grandfather to ninety-seven,
And great-great-grandfather to twenty-three,
In all two hundred and fifty-one."

—(Pettigrew's Chronicles of the Tombs, pp. 215, 503, 506.)

We might give many other similar examples, but these will suffice; and our adverse critics will surely allow the possibility of such cases having occurred among the Hebrew families in Egypt. From the foregoing remarks the reader will now perceive that even this stronghold of the opponents of Scripture is by no means impregnable, and that the difficulties with which they invest the subject after all admits of a ready solution. The adverse critics have quoted the extravagant interpretations of the celebrated Rabbi Solomon Jarchi, Bishop Patrick, and others, as proofs of the unsoundness of their position, and of course to show how much more reasonable their arguments are; but surely the wisest and most learned is apt to say sometimes an unreasonable thing. Yet whilst we readily allow the explanations given on Exod. i. 7, by these commentators to be extravagant, it is nevertheless an undoubted fact, that it is not an uncommon thing for Egyptian women to give birth to twins, and even to three or four children at a time. This is attested both by ancient and modern writers. Pliny remarks: "That three are born at a birth is undoubted, to bear above that number is considered as an extraordinary phenomenon, except in Egypt, where the waters of the Nile are fructifying." (Hist. Nat. vii. 3). Aristotle observes: "Often the women give birth to twins as in Egypt, and even to three or four children at a time." (Hist. Anim. vii. 4). Mallet in his *Description of Egypt*, p. 18, ascribes this fertility "to the uncommon salubrity of the air in Egypt." (See also Stalberg, *History of Religion*, i., p. 252.) (Resonmüller *Orient*. i. 252, 253). (J. D. Michael's, in his note on Exd. xii. 37).

28. *And he sent Judah before him to Joseph to direct his face to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.*

When Jacob, with his family, drew near unto Egypt he sent Judah to Joseph to inform him of their arrival, and להורר לפניו גשן (*lehoroth lephanav Goshenah*) literally, "to direct his face to Goshen," i. e., that Joseph might direct him as to what part of Goshen he was to proceed as the place of their future abode. As soon as Joseph heard of his father's arrival, he at once made ready his chariot to meet him at Goshen. It was proper for Joseph, as viceroy, to travel in a carriage suitable to his high station; hence, we read, he made ready מרכבתו (*mercavto*), "his chariot" (v. 29). The Egyptians despised strangers, especially shepherds; but the natives of Goshen would recognise the high office of Joseph by his equipage, and would command proper treatment and respect towards his family among the inhabitants. The narrative describes the scene of meeting briefly, yet graphically: "And

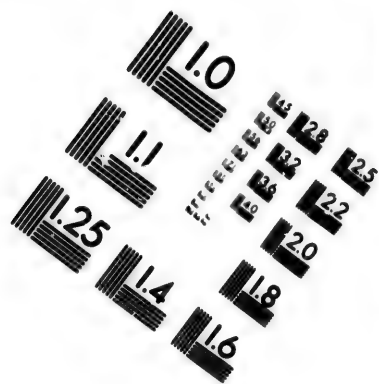
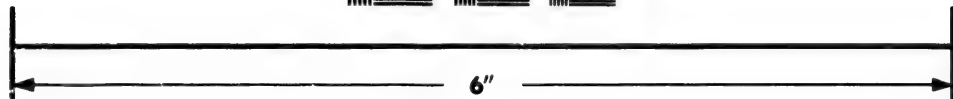
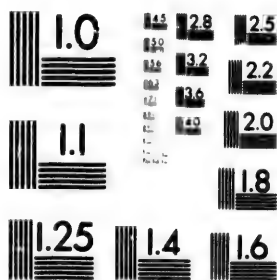


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he appeared before him, and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a long time. And Israel said unto Joseph, now let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou *art* yet alive" (vv. 29, 30). In seeing and embracing again his favourite son, for whom he had so long mourned as dead, the aged patriarch found the greatest earthly joy he could have hoped for, and is now willing to die since, by a merciful Providence, he was permitted to enjoy this happiness. Joseph then told his brothers that he would go and inform Pharaoh of the arrival of his family, and instructed his brothers that if the king should call for them, and ask them about their occupation they were to tell him that they had been breeders of cattle from their youth, as also had been their fathers before them, in order that they might have the land of Goshen assigned to them for a dwelling place. And in order to impress upon them the necessity of following his advice, he gives as a reason, "for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians." From this we may infer, by their dwelling in the land of Goshen, they would not come into close intercourse with the Egyptians. It is not easily accounted for, the Egyptians having entertained such intense contempt against shepherds, since many of the natives followed that occupation. Indeed, the pastors in Egypt formed a considerable portion of the fourth caste. And it is certain, also, that the rearing of cattle itself was not looked upon as degrading, for, according to ch. xlvii. 6, Pharaoh himself was a possessor of cattle, and even requests Joseph that if he knew any men of ability among his brothers, to make them overseers over his cattle. It is, therefore, most probable that the hatred of the Egyptians to shepherds extended only to foreign ones who roamed about with their flocks. The origin of the animosity to foreign shepherds may, no doubt, be traced to the occupation of Egypt by the "Hyksos, generally known as the shepherd kings, who practised great cruelty during their occupation of the country. (See Wilkins. ii., 16.) The animosity thus engendered became gradually more and more intensified by the constant invasions of the eastern boundaries of the country by nomadic shepherds, against whom the Egyptians were obliged to send armies. (See Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, i. 219).

* Hyksos or Hykshos, from *hyk*, a ruler, and *shos*, a shepherd; according to Josephus, there were six or eight kings of them.

CHAPTER XLVII.

1. *And Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan, and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.*

2. *And from the whole number of his brethren he took five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.*

Though Pharaoh had invested Joseph with the entire control of the affairs of the country, yet he would not take upon himself to place his family in possession of a tract of land without first obtaining the king's permission to do so. He therefore went to inform Pharaoh of the arrival of his family, taking at the same time with him five of his brothers as representatives of the whole family. As Joseph had anticipated, Pharaoh asked them about their occupation, and they answered according as Joseph had instructed them that they were shepherds, as their fathers had been, and added that they had come to sojourn in the land, as there was no pasture for their flocks in the land of Canaan, on account of the famine with which that country was sorely afflicted, and that they therefore be permitted to take up their abode in the land of Goshen.

5. *And Pharaoh spake to Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee.*

6. *The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell; and if thou knowest any men of ability among them, then make them overseers over my cattle.*

Pharaoh was evidently not only of kindly disposition, but also very grateful for the great services which Joseph had rendered him. "Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee," said the kind-hearted king, it is therefore your duty to see that they are properly cared for. There shall be no obstacles put in your way to do so, the whole land of Egypt is before you, select the best of the country for them, even the most fertile parts of Goshen, and should there be any capable men among your brethren, make them *מְרִירִי* (*sare*) overseers or controllers over my cattle. The term *מִקְנֵה* (*mikneh*) is evidently here used in the comprehensive sense, as including also the *shepherds*, like ch. xxix. 3, and is therefore well rendered in the Arabic Version: "Make them rulers over those who are set over my cattle." The office of controller of the shepherds and flocks of eastern princes seems to have been of a high order, for in 1 Chron. xxvii. 25-31, it is enumerated among the chief public officials.

Some of our modern critics regard it as very strange that Joseph did not present his father to Pharaoh before he presented his brothers, or at least at the same time with them. But Joseph had no doubt good reasons for acting as he did, though his motives may not be apparent to us. It is, however, quite probable, that as the introduction of his brothers partook of a business character to obtain a certain favour from the king, out of respect to his father being the chieftain of his family, he did not wish him to be present on the occasion of soliciting the favour; but as soon as their request had been granted, then, as a token of respect to the king, he presented his father to him.

7. *And Joseph brought Jacob, his father, and placed him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.*

Jacob showed himself grateful for the many kindnesses which he and his family had received at the hand of Pharaoh by bestowing a solemn blessing. The blessing was, no doubt, a fervent prayer for the welfare of the king. In later times, the ordinary salutation to a king was, *יחי המלך לעולם* (*yechi hammelech leolam*), may the king live forever. (See 1 Sam. x. 34; 1 Kings i. 23).

8. *And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How many are the years of thy life? (Or more literally, "How many are the days of the years of thy life?")*

It would appear from the king's question that he was particularly struck with the venerable appearance of Jacob. Probably the Egyptians did not attain to such a great age. He may also have expected that the question would elicit in the reply some information regarding his past life.

9. *And Jacob said to Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.*

The comparison of life to pilgrimage was common among the eastern people. Thus the Psalmist says,

"For I am a stranger with thee,
A sojourner, as all my fathers were."
(Ps. xxxix. 13, Eng. Ver. v. 12.)

Compare, also, Ps. cxix. 54, Heb. xi. 13. The Persians have a saying that "The world is a caravansary, we are a caravan in it, but never do the pilgrims tarry long in the caravansary." The Egyptians called the dwellings of the living *inus*, to

indicate that they are only for a short occupation; whilst they called the tombs of the dead *eternal houses*. (Diod. Siculus, i. 51.) Jacob, on leaving the presence of Pharaoh, again bestowed his blessing. Joseph, in compliance with Pharaoh's command, made his father and his brothers dwell "in the land of Ramesis" (v. 11), which is synonymous with "in the land of Goshen" (v. 4). This tract of land was not given to them merely for temporary occupation, but as a possession, and there their descendants dwelled, and multiplied exceedingly (v. 27). Joseph also supplied his father's household with all the necessities of life during the continuation of the famine (v. 12).

13. *And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very heavy, and the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan were exhausted on account of the famine.*

The narrative now returns again to the terrible famine, giving a brief account of what took place during the remaining years.

Only two years of famine had as yet past, and already the land of Egypt, and the land of Canaan were exhausted in its effects. The money realized from the sale of corn Joseph paid into "the house of Pharaoh" (v. 14), *i. e.*, into the royal treasury. When the Egyptians had spent their money they demanded that bread might be given to them to save them from starvation, "why should we die in thy presence?" (v. 15), they exclaimed. But whatever commiseration Joseph may have felt for the people, the corn they demanded did not belong to him, it was the king's property, and as his steward he could not give it away. He, therefore, told the people, if their money is spent, to bring their cattle, and he would give them corn in exchange. With this proposition the people seemingly complied readily. They brought their horses, and flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, and asses; for which Joseph supplied them with bread that year (vv. 16, 17).

Our adverse critics have charged Joseph with cruel treatment of the people in order that he might enrich his benefactor the king; but a mere cursory view of the deplorable state of affairs will show quite the contrary to be the case. The people must inevitably have lost their cattle, not having the means to provide them with food; by selling them to Joseph, they had a chance to recover them after the famine, very probably on reasonable terms, in the same manner as they afterwards recovered their landed property again. The people seemed to have had perfect confidence in Joseph, that he was doing the best both for the people and the country, and appeared to have submitted to his directions without a murmur.

18. *And when that year was ended, they came to him the second year, and said to him, We will not hide it from my lord : but our money is spent ; and the herds of cattle belong to my lord ; there is nothing left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands :*

19. *Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land ? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh : and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the land be not desolate.*

"They came to him the second year," that is, not the second year of the famine, but from the failing of their money. "We will not hide it from my lord." Why should they wish to hide it? But the fact is, it appears that it was then, as it is now, those who have lived in affluence, or even in easy circumstances, are loth to make confession of poverty unless driven to it by extreme necessity. The language of the Egyptians implies that if it had been possible to keep the knowledge of their reduced state from Joseph they would have done so. "Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land?" that is, Why should we die, and our land become desolate? Uncultivated land was by the Hebrews and Arabians looked upon as dead, hence to cultivate a desolate field is spoken of as *bringing it to life*. (Koran, Sur. xxv. 51.) "Buy us and our land for bread," &c. The people of their own accord offer their land and themselves in exchange for bread; "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life," (Job ii. 4). They are willing to become servants to Pharaoh, and work their lands for him, merely asking that they might be provided with seed. Our adverse critics have characterized Joseph's conduct as extremely tyrannical and heartless, as evincing no commiseration for the people, but rather taking advantage of the miserable condition to which the famine had reduced them to enrich and increase the power of an ambitious tyrant. But whatever unfavourable view the opponents of Scripture may take of Joseph's conduct, certain it is that the Egyptians themselves looked upon him as the preserver of their lives. "And they said, thou has saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be servants to Pharaoh," (v. 25). Joseph, at the request of the people, bought their land for Pharaoh, so that it became his property, (v. 20). It will, however, be seen from verse 24 that the land was again restored to the people, and that only a tax of *one-fifth* was imposed upon them.

21. *And as for the people, he removed them to the cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end of it.*

In this removal of the people to the cities, our adverse critics

can find nothing but heartless conduct on the part of Joseph. Thus "Dr. Kalisch, who echos the sentiments of the German rationalistic writers, observes, "Joseph, impatient to pursue his policy to the utmost consequences, and eager to use the opportunity which, perhaps might never recur, indeed, bought both lands and owners, but heartlessly separating the one from the other, transplanted the people 'from one end of the boundary of Egypt to the other,' anxious to create and to keep alive in their minds a feeling of perfect dependence, unconcerned at tearing asunder all the dear and sacred ties which for generation had bound the families to their hereditary soil, and indifferent at the sight of wandering millions becoming strangers in their own country." (Com. on Genesis, p. 703.) It is really strange that our adverse critics will only take a one-sided view of Biblical subjects. It is surely the duty of an impartial critic to set before his readers what may be said in favour as well as what may be said against a subject, and in the case before us it is not very difficult to discover the motive for Joseph removing the people to the cities or to their neighborhood. It was evidently done in order to facilitate the distribution of the provisions among the millions of people by bringing them nearer to the store-houses. An unbiased critic would look upon it as an exceeding wise act, if, indeed, it was not absolutely a necessary one. The land of the priests Joseph did not buy, for these lands were not alienable, they being assigned to them by the king. From the landed property the priests obtained their revenue, and from it they were obliged, by the constitution of the kingdom, to furnish the sacrifices and provide all the expenses of the national religion. (Comp. Diod. Siculus, i. 73.)

23. *And Joseph said to the people. Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh; lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.*

24. *And it shall come to pass in the increase (i. e., in the harvest), that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for those of your households, and for food for your little ones.*

It is evident from our passage that although the people had sold themselves and their lands to Pharaoh, they were by no means treated as slaves. When the famine was drawing to a close, they were furnished with seed to sow their land, and all they had to pay to the king was "one fifth," which certainly

* I have quoted from Dr. Kalisch's commentary in preference to from a German one, because it is written in English and was published in London (England).

was not a heavy tax, where the increase is generally thirty-fold, and compares very favourably with the tax levied under some despotic governments even at the present time. In order to assure the regular and ready payment of the yearly tax, Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt, exempting only the land which had been ceded to the priests, and which they held by inalienable right, and could therefore not be interfered with even by the king.

The narrative now returns again to the history of Jacob, giving the closing account of his life. The patriarch had lived seventeen years in Egypt, and had attained to the age of a hundred and forty-seven years. Increasing infirmities now warned him that the days of his pilgrimage on earth were drawing to an end, and anxious that he might not be buried in Egypt, but be joined in burial with his fathers in Canaan, the land of promise, he sent for Joseph, in order to obtain from him the solemn promise that his wishes would be faithfully fulfilled, and Joseph gave him the assurance that he would do in accordance with his words (v. 30).

31. *And he said, Swear to me : and he swore to him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.*

It may perhaps be regarded as somewhat strange that Jacob should have demanded an oath from Joseph after having pledged his word that he would do according to his father's wishes. But he may have feared that Pharaoh might probably object to Joseph leaving Egypt unless he was bound by an oath which he knew would be respected. When Joseph had given the solemn promise, "Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head," that is, he bowed himself towards the head of the bed, and worshipped God, giving thanks for the promise he had received from his son. The verb יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (*yishtachu*), *bowed himself*, usually includes the idea of worshipping. So David in his old age, and confined to his bed, "bowed himself upon the bed," and worshipped God (1 Kings i. 47). In the Septuagint, however, it is rendered, "bowed himself upon the top of his staff," reading מַטֵּה (*mattek*), *staff*, instead of מִטָּה (*mittah*), *bed*. As the consonants are the same, before the introduction of the vowel points, the word could be read either way. But most critics regard the present reading of the Hebrew text as the correct one. And Symmachus and Aquila have also rendered "bed." The statement in Hebrews xi. 21, does not favour the Septuagint reading, for that statement refers to Jacob blessing the two sons of Joseph recorded in chapter xlviii.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

1. *And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick : and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.*

We have seen, at the close of the preceding chapter, when Jacob felt that his life was drawing to a close, he sent for Joseph in order to obtain from him the solemn promise that he would bury him with his fathers. Although at that time in a feeble state, he was apparently not actually ill. Some time, however, after Joseph had given the promise—the narrative does not state what length of time had intervened—he was informed that his father was sick, and at once hastened to his father's bedside, taking with him his two sons, no doubt that they might obtain their grandfather's blessing before his death.

2. *And *one told Jacob, and said, Behold thy son Joseph cometh unto thee ; and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.*

Joseph, not knowing how ill his father might be, and fearing lest the sudden appearance with his two sons before him might be productive of evil consequences, very considerably took the precaution to have his arrival quietly announced to him. The news of his son's coming to see him revived the spirit of the feeble patriarch, and he exerted himself to sit up on the bed.

3. *And Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,*

4. *And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people ; and will give this land to thy seed after thee, for an everlasting possession.*

No doubt Jacob had often spoken of this manifestation and promise made to him to his household, but as he was now about to adopt Joseph's two eldest sons as his own, and make them equal sharers with his sons in the promised inheritance, he very appropriately reverts to it again to impress upon Joseph that in virtue of that promise made to him he was entitled to divide the promised land among his progeny.

*The verb וַיֹּאמֶר (*vaiyomer*) must here be taken impersonally—as is often the case with the third pers. fut. of verbs—and rendered “and one told”; corresponding to the impersonal German expression *man sagt*, or that of the French *on dit*.

5. *And now thy two sons, who were born to thee in the land of Egypt before I came to thee into Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, like Reuben and Simon.*

6. *But thy issue which thou hast begotten after them shall be thine; they shall be called after the names of their brethren in their inheritances.*

In the adoption, it will be seen that Ephraim and Manasseh were to rank like the two oldest sons of Jacob; but, as Reuben was deprived of his birthright and the descendants of Simeon were to be scattered among the other tribes, as we shall hereafter see, Joseph actually obtained the position of the firstborn, so far as regards the inheritance of the promised land. The sons who were born to Joseph after Jacob came into Egypt were not to become heads of tribes, but their descendants were to be included in the families of Ephraim and Manasseh, and have their inheritance with them.

7. *And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by my side in the land of Canaan, in the way, when yet there was a little way to come to Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath, the same is Bethlehem.*

The reader will perceive that this allusion to Rachel's death has no connection whatever either with what precedes or follows. It can therefore only be regarded as the last tribute of affection to Rachel, his beloved wife. It may probably also have been intended to increase Joseph's love for the country where his beloved mother is buried, and kindle in him an earnest desire to have his remains also brought up into the promised land. It must be remembered Joseph's ties to the land of Egypt were not of an insignificant nature. He had been raised from a slave to the viceroy of the country, and had become in close relationship by marriage to one of the most noble and influential families of the land. Jacob's eyesight being dim from old age, he did not recognize Joseph's two sons; but, on being told who they were, he asked Joseph to bring them to him that he might bless them. When the lads came near him, he embraced and kissed them; and, with a grateful heart for this token of God's mercy, he exclaimed, "I had not hoped to see thy face *again*, and lo, God has permitted me to see thy seed also" (v. 11). Joseph, in arranging his sons for the reception of the blessing, placed them in such a manner that Jacob's right hand would come upon the head of his eldest son Manasseh and the left hand upon the head of Ephraim; but Jacob deliberately laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim and his left hand upon the head of Manasseh. In doing so he was obliged to cross his arms.

When Joseph perceived what his father had done, he deemed it his paternal duty to protect the birthright of his eldest son, and held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. "And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father, for this *is* the first born; put thy right hand upon his head" (vv. 17, 18). But although Jacob's eyesight was dim, the vision of his prophetic eye was strong. The blessing which he was about to bestow was not an ordinary blessing, or he would doubtless have respected the right of primogeniture. It was a prophetic blessing, and in the bestowal of it the patriarch was under the guidance of Him who alone knows what will happen in the future. Jacob, therefore, refused to remove his hand, and said to Joseph, "I know it my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations" (v. 19).

15. *And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who fed me from my birth unto this day.*

16. *The angel who redeemed me from all evil, may bless the lads, and let in them my name be called, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac: and let them increase into a multitude in the midst of the earth.*

"And he blessed Joseph," that is, he blessed Joseph in bestowing a blessing upon his sons. A parent will be as grateful for the blessing bestowed upon his children as if it were bestowed upon himself. "The God who fed me from my birth." The phrase *הרעה אותי* (*haroeah othi*) implies more than merely to feed; it means to guide, to watch over, and to provide for, as a shepherd. (Comp. Ps. xxiii. 1; xxviii. 9.) "The angel who redeemed me." The act ascribed to the angel shows clearly that it was not a created angel, but the same who in other places is spoken of as "the angel of the Lord," Jehovah manifested in the form of an angel. (Comp. my note on ch. xvi. 7.) Spoken of also in Isaiah lxiii. 9 as "the angel of his face," to whom is ascribed there likewise saving and redeeming power. "And let in them my name be called," that is, not only be called by my name "Israel," but also be partakers in the blessings promised to me and to my fathers Abraham and Isaac. It is only by their becoming heirs of the promise that it can be said that the name of Abraham and Isaac is called in Ephraim and Manasseh. "And let them increase into a multitude." The rendering "increase" does not convey an adequate meaning of the Hebrew verb *דגן* (*dagu*), which means to *multiply like fish*. This is the only place in the Old Testament where

the verb is employed, and is no doubt derived from the noun דָּג (*dag*), a fish. And, indeed, already in the time of Moses the descendants of Joseph by his two sons numbered 85,200 warriors, surpassing in number any of the other tribes. (See Num. xxvi. 22, 34, 37).

20. *And he blessed them on that day, saying, By thee shall Israel bless, saying, May God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh: and he put Ephraim before Manasseh.*

How literally has all this been fulfilled. * "May God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh," has always among the Hebrews been used as the form of blessing. Even to this day the orthodox Jews use it at stated times in blessing their sons. Whilst in blessing their daughters, they make use of the form, "may God make thee like Rachel and Leah." Then as regards the distinction conferred on Ephraim in the blessing, we find that shortly after the exodus from Egypt at the first numbering of Israel in the wilderness, the Ephraimites exceeded the men of Manasseh by upwards of eight thousand soldiers, and bore one of the four great standards of the Hebrew hosts, whilst the tribes of Manasseh and Benjamin followed the standard of the tribe of Ephraim. (See Num. ii. 18-24). It is true, that immediately before the entrance into Canaan, the tribe of Manasseh outnumbered the tribe of Ephraim, by upwards of 20,000 men (see ch. xxvi. 34, 37); but this increase was merely temporary, and may have been caused by some of the younger families of Joseph's descendants having for a time cast their lot with the tribe of Manasseh. Joshua, the conqueror of Canaan, who belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, allotted to the Ephraimites as their portion, one of the most fertile parts of Palestine, extending from the Mediterranean Sea on the west, to the river Jordan on the east (Josh. xvi. 1). In the time of the Judges, the tribe of Ephraim increased greatly, both in number and power, and finally became the head of the ten tribes. The haughty and domineering spirit of the Ephraimites is indicated in several places. (Comp. Josh. xvii. 14; Judg. viii. 1-3; xii. 1). The tabernacle and the ark were for a long time deposited at Shiloh, which was within the limits of the tribe of Ephraim. This possession of the sacerdotal establishment which was the central object of attraction to the other tribes, must have greatly contributed to increase the importance and wealth of the tribe of Ephraim. Within its territory Deborah, the prophetess and heroine, judged Israel. But what gave the

*The auxiliary verbs *may, could, would*, are wanting in Hebrew, they are expressed by using the future of the verb, hence יִשְׁמַךְ אֱלֹהִים "may God make thee."

tribe of Ephraim afterwards such great prominence was, that Jeroboam, the first king of Israel, was of that tribe, and that the seat of the new kingdom was established in it. Hence the term "Ephraim" is often used to signify "the kingdom of Israel." The custom of the imposition of hands as the symbol of conferring blessings, powers, or authority, we perceive, dates back to the patriarchal age. It formed afterwards a part also of the sacrificial ritual, and became in time a usual mode of initiation into sacred offices both among the Jews and Christians. The *right hand* was always regarded as superior to the left. (Comp. 1 Kings ii. 19; Ps. xl. 10; ex. 1 Isa. lxii. 8.) The right hand was lifted up on all occasions, especially in performing an oath, which will explain the words of the Psalmist:

"Their mouth speaketh vanity,
And their right hand is a right hand of falsehood."

(Ps. cxli. 8.)

That is, they lift up their right hand in swearing to lies.

21. *And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die; but God will be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.*

Seventeen years had now elapsed since Jacob came down into Egypt; they must have been years of mutual pleasure to father and son. But the aged patriarch's pilgrimage upon earth was drawing to a close, and he is preparing his affectionate son for the stroke of affliction, but adding the consolation, "God will be with you," as much as to say, God who had renewed the promise to me which He had made to my fathers Abraham and Isaac to possess the land of Canaan, He will be with you, and surely fulfil that promise by bringing you up again into the land of your fathers.

22. *And I give to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hands of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.*

In the Authorized and Revised Versions the words נתתי לך (*nathatti lecha*) are rendered, "I have given to thee," but though the original admits of this rendering, yet it is quite unsuitable to the context. It is only now by adopting the two sons of Joseph, and making them co-heirs with his other sons that he assigns to Joseph through his sons, one portion above what his other brothers receive each as a single tribe. "One portion above thy brethren;" in the original, we have the peculiarity of the term שכם (*shechem*) a *shoulder*, being here used metaphorically to express "a portion" of land, or tract of country. So the Arabians sometimes call a tract of land a *shoulder*. As the Hebrew term is similar to the name

of the town Shechem, and as that town was situated in the portion which was afterwards assigned to the tribe of Ephraim, many commentators have erroneously interpreted our verse to refer to the slaughter of the Shechemites, and the plundering of that town; but such an application of the passage would imply that Jacob approved of the atrocious act committed by his sons Simeon and Levi, whereas he condemned it in the most severe terms. Besides Jacob did not keep possession of Shechem; but, on the contrary, immediately after the perpetration of the cruel deed, departed from the place, for fear of vengeance being taken upon his family by the neighbouring tribes. No more happy is the application of other commentators who explain it, to refer to the piece of ground near Shechem where Jacob dwelled, and where afterwards Joseph was buried, for this piece of ground was not obtained by his sword and his bow, but was purchased from Hamor for a hundred kesitahs. The writers who adopted this application in order to get over this difficulty, say that the Amorites most likely had taken possession of the piece of ground after the removal of Jacob from the place, and that the patriarch was obliged to wrest it again from them by force of arms. But this is mere conjecture, there is not the slightest allusion in the sacred narrative to any such occurrence having taken place. The proper interpretation of our verse doubtless is, that it contains a prophetic declaration of the conquest of the promised land with the sword and with the bow. The use of the *preterite* for the *future*, is very common in prophetic declarations. The prophets in speaking of future events, frequently speak of them as having already, taken place, or as taking place at the time, being so sure of their fulfilment. They see with prophetic eyes the events as if actually passing before their vision. Compare Isa. v. 13; ix. 2, 6; and so in many other places; and so the verb לקחתי (*lakachti*) "I took," or "I have taken," is prophetically employed for "I will take" that is, through my descendants. "Out of the hand of the Amorite"; we have already stated that the Amorites were the most powerful of all the different tribes inhabiting the promised land; they are therefore sometimes employed as representatives of the heathen inhabitants of Canaan in general. In this sense the term "Amorite" is evidently employed in our passage.

CHAPTER XLIX.

1. *And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, and I will declare to you that which shall befall you in future days.*

2. *Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken to Israel your father.*

The sons of Jacob having large possessions of cattle, were necessarily scattered with their families over the land of Goshen. The patriarch perceiving that the days of his life were drawing to a close "called unto his sons," that is, he sent messengers to the different parts where they were residing, and summoned them before him. The object of the patriarch was not merely to take his last farewell of them, but more particularly that he might make known to them what should happen to their posterity "in future days." The communication of those prophetic declarations, gave additional solemnity to this last meeting, whilst the utterances coming from the lips of their dying father, could not fail to become indelibly impressed upon the minds of the assembled sons. The expression *בְּאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים* (*beacharith ha'yamim*), which we have above rendered, "in future days," though often used without having reference to any precise or limited time, as in the passage before us, also Numb. xxiv. 14, and now, behold I am going to my people; come, I will inform thee what this people shall do unto thy people "in future days," (Auth. Ver. "in the latter days,") see also Deut. iv. 30; yet unquestionably also refers sometimes to the time of the Messiah, and in that case it is rightly translated, *in the last days*. Thus, for instance, Isa. ii. 2; "and it shall come to pass in the last days, the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it." So Micah iv. 2. Although Jacob's prophetic declarations had their fulfilment only some centuries afterwards, yet they were addressed to his sons personally as the founders of the tribes. The language too, in which the blessings are couched possesses all the characteristics of Hebrew poetry.

3. *Reuben my first born art thou,
My might, and the beginning of my strength,
The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:*

4. *A boiling up as of water art thou, 'thou shalt not excel;
For thou ascendest the bed of thy father,
Then thou didst defile it:
My couch he hath ascended.*

"Reuben," Hebrew רֶעוּבֵן (*Reüven*), *i. e.*, see ye a son, was probably an expression of joy which Leah made use of at the birth of her first-born son, and which she imposed on the child as his name. "My might," that is, the child begotten in the full vigour of manhood, "And the beginning of my strength;" this expression is nearly of the same import as the preceding, and was employed to denote *the first-born*. Perhaps from the idea of *the first born son* possessing more strength than the other childrer.. It is several times found as a parallelism with *first-born*, as Deut. xxi. 17; Ps. lxxviii. 51, and again Ps. cv. 36.

And he smote all the first-born in their land,
All the beginning of their strength.

From these passages it is evident that the phrases, *beginning of my strength* and *first-born*, are synonymous terms, and the sense of the passage is therefore correctly conveyed in the Septuagint rendering ἀρχὴ τεκνῶν μου, *i. e.*, "the beginning of my children." "The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power"; in the first expression, allusion is evidently made to the priesthood, an honour and prerogative pertaining to the birthright in those times, before the regular institution of the priesthood under the Mosaic law. The latter expression refers to the rule and government of the family, which likewise devolved upon the first-born, and to the double portion of the inheritance which by right he would have received. Onkelos in his Chaldee version (*Targum*) has paraphrased verse 3, "Reuben, my first-born art thou, my might and the beginning of my strength; thou wouldst have received three portions, the birth-right, (*i. e.*, the double portion of the inheritance), the priesthood, and the kingdom." The Jerusalem Targum, has paraphrased it: "And for the sin of my son Reuben, the birth-right is given to Joseph, the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi." "A boiling up as of water art thou"; that is, thou didst boil up like water with lust, alluding to Reuben's incestuous connection with his father's concubine Bilhah. (See Gen. xxxv. 22.) The crime which Reuben had committed was one of the deepest dye, and the pain and grief which the act caused to the pious and aged patriarch, must indeed have been great in the extreme. Such a deed demanded the severest punishment that the father could inflict, and consequently he deprives him of his birth-right. "Thou shalt not excel"; *i. e.*, thou art cut off from the prominence which would have belonged to the first-born. And how literally was this fulfilled! To Joseph was given the double portion (compare 1 Chron. v. 1-2); on Levi was conferred the priesthood, (for the tribe of Levi was set apart for the service of God, and to the family of Aaron was given the right of the priesthood; whilst Judah

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obtained the pre-eminence, as we read in 1 Chron. v. 2, "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the prince." The tribe of Reuben never obtained any importance, and at no time made a figure in the history of the nation. It produced neither kings nor heroes, and so far from performing any great exploits, it was reproached by Deborah for the want of courage. (See Judg. v. 16.) At the numbering of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, the second year after they came out of Egypt, the tribe of Reuben numbered 46,500 adult males (Num. i. 22), and accordingly ranked as seventh in population; but from the census taken in the plains of Moab, before entering into the land of Canaan (Num. xxiv. 7), it appears that its number had decreased, amounting only to 43,750, which made it rank the ninth as to population. Let the doom of Reuben serve as a warning, that many pleasures of this world, like some poisonous fruits which appear attractive to the sight, will, when tasted, prove highly injurious, if not altogether fatal to him that allows himself to be enticed by their external appearance.

Reuben's conduct in regard to Joseph, however, presents to us a brighter picture of his character. His endeavour to save Joseph's life when the brothers conspired to kill him, indicates an improved state of mind, and leaves us to hope that he had sincerely repented of his former guilt. He well knew how great a service he would render his father by the saving of his most dearly beloved son, and thus make at least some amends for the injury he had inflicted on him. It was no doubt in consideration of this laudable conduct, that Moses in his blessings of the twelve tribes (Deut. xxxiii. 6,) declared: "Let Rueben live and not die; and let not his men be few." As much as to say, the tribe of Reuben shall exist, and not become extinct. Accordingly, we find that it received as its inheritance the tract of country now called *Al Belka*; also, by the Arabs *Belad al Kafer*, i. e., *the land of the unbelievers*, because it was at one time inhabited by many Christians. Its southern boundary was the river Arnon, which separated it from Moab; to the west it bordered on the Dead Sea; and to the north and east it was bounded by the tribe of Gad."

5. *Simeon and Levi are brethren ;
Instruments of violence are their swords.*

6. *In their council enter not, my soul,
In their assembly do not join, my heart ;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their wantonness they haughed an ox.*

7. *Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,
And their wrath, for it was cruel :
I will disperse them in Jacob,
I will scatter them in Israel.*

We have already given the meaning of the names of Simeon and Levi, and pointed out why they were so called. "Simeon and Levi are brethren," that is, they not only are children of the same mother, but likewise possess the same wicked character and disposition. This they evinced in their being associated in their treacherous murder of the Shechemites; and, according to the uniform tradition of the Jews, they were the chief instigators of the conspiracy against Joseph. "Instruments of violence are their swords;" owing to the Hebrew word מְכֹרֶתֵיהֶם (*mecherothem*), which I have rendered by "their swords," occurring only in this place, the passage has been variously translated. The English Version has "instruments of cruelty are in their habitation," deriving the word from מְכוּרָה (*mechurah*), which, however, denotes *birth*, or *nativity*, and not *habitation*. In the margin, the passage is rendered, "their swords are weapons of violence," which shows that the translators thought such a rendering admissible, and is precisely the same as I have given. Others derive the word in question from the Arabic or Ethiopic, and attach to it the signification of *consultations*, and read קָלָה (*killu*), *they accomplish*, instead of קֵלִי (*kele*) *instruments*; the passage would then read *they accomplish the violence of their consultations*.

This emendation, although authorized by the Samaritan and Greek Versions, is very far fetched, and does not convey a clear meaning. Besides there is no doubt a distinct allusion in our passage to Gen. xxxiv. 25, "Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males." The rendering which I have given, is adopted by Luther, in the Revised Version, and by most commentators. "In their council enter not, my soul: in their assembly do not join, my heart." This refers to the planning of the daring project to kill the Shechemites. The Hebrew word כְּבוֹד (*cavod*), *honour, glory*, is in poetry often employed to denote *the heart, the spirit*, as the noblest part of man. Thus, for instance, Ps. xvi. 9, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my spirit rejoiceth." The rendering in the English Version, "My glory rejoiceth," does not afford a clear meaning. "For in their anger they slew a man, and in their wantonness they haughed an ox." The last clause of the passage is given in the English Version: "and in their selfwill they digged down a wall,"

the translators must have read שֹׁר (shur), a wall, instead of שֹׁר (shor), an ox, adopting merely a different pointing of the word from that which exists in the present editions of the Hebrew Bible, in which they have evidently followed the Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate Versions. There are, however, several strong objections to such a rendering. In the first place, there is no allusion in the narrative of the occurrence to which the passage refers, to the digging down of any wall or the destruction of the city, it is merely said "they spoiled," (*i. e.*, they plundered) the city. (See Gen. xxxiv. 27). Secondly the verb עָקַר (*akar*) in the *Piel* conjugation, occurs only in the sense to *haugh*, to *hamstring*, *i. e.*, to cut the back sinews of the legs of horses, by which they are rendered useless. (See Josh. xl. 6, 9; 2 Sam. viii. 4; 1 Chro. viii. 4.) The rendering "an ox," is unquestionably the correct one, which is here employed figuratively to denote a man of distinction, and refers to Hamor, the prince of the country, or to Shechem, his son, whom the sons of Jacob induced to be circumcised, and whilst thus disabled, fell upon them and slew them. We may remark here that bulls in several places in the Old Testament are figuratively used for nobles or great men, as for example: Ps. xxii. 13, (Eng. Ver. v. 12; Ps. lxviii. 31; (Eng. Ver. v. 30.) Many commentators take the nouns אִישׁ (*ish*), "a man," and שֹׁר (*shor*), "an ox," collectively; and explain the first to refer to the male population of Shechem, and the second to the cattle which Jacob's sons destroyed, as it was impossible to drive all away. "I will disperse them in Jacob, I will scatter them in Israel;" that is, I predict that they shall surely be dispersed. The prophets, in order to give greater force to their declarations, sometimes declare to do themselves what they merely predict will come to pass. So Ezekiel xliii. 3: "When I came to destroy the city," *i. e.*, when I came to prophecy that the city should be destroyed. Sometimes they are represented as performing what they merely foretell; as Isa. vi. 10: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears dull, and close up their eyes, lest they see with their eyes," &c. It must not be understood that the prophet was to do this by an act of his ministry, but merely that he speaks of the event as a fact which would surely happen.

The prophecy of Jacob regarding Simeon and Levi was literally fulfilled. The punishment for their cruel and wicked conduct towards the Shechemites was indeed delayed, but it came at last. Simeon is not mentioned at all by Moses in his blessing of the twelve tribes, Deut. xxxiii. The portion which was assigned to this tribe was in the midst of that of the tribe of Judah, for we read in Joshua xix. 9: "Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of

Simeon, for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them." According to 1 Chron. iv. 41-43, there was an emigration from this tribe, owing, perhaps, to the increase of the population of the tribe of Judah, which made those belonging to the tribe of Simeon give way to its superior strength. The tribe of Simeon at the time of the exode, contained 59,300 men able to go forth to war, (see Num. i. 22, 23), according to which it ranked third in number; but before entering Palestine its number was reduced to 22,200, (see Num. xxvi. 14), which made it rank the lowest of all the tribes.

The descendants of Levi were likewise dispersed among the other tribes, the forty-eight cities which were set apart for them being scattered over the whole land of Canaan, so that in their case also the prophecy of Jacob was literally fulfilled. The promptness of the sons of Levi in gathering themselves to Moses, when he stood at the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? let him come to me;" and the willingness which they evinced to execute his command, converted his dispersion into a benefit and blessing, in having the honour of the priesthood bestowed upon them. (Exod. xxxii. 26-29.) The Levitical cities were distributed among the tribes, nine of them receiving four each, whilst the tribe of Judah, whose portion was very large, and in whose territory the tribe of Simeon had his inheritance, received nine, the tribe of Naphtali receiving three only.

8. *Judah thou art, thy brethren shall praise thee ;
Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies ;
The children of thy father shall bow down to thee.*
9. *A Lion's whelp is Judah :
From the prey, my son, thou hast gone up ;
He stoopeth down he coucheth, as a lion,
And as a lioness ; who shall rouse him up ?*
10. *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,
Until Shiloh come ;
And unto him shall be the obedience of the nations.*
11. *Binding to the vine his foal,
And his ass's colt to the choice vine ;
He washes in wine his garment,
And in the blood of grapes his vesture*
12. *Sparkling are his eyes from wine,
And white his teeth from milk.*

Judah was the fourth son of Jacob by Leah, and, as we have already explained, the name signifies praise. (See Gen. xxix. 35.) "Thy brethren shall praise thee;" that is, they shall acknowledge thee as their superior, and honour thee for the high distinctions conferred upon thee. From Judah descended the royal House of David, and he was the progenitor, according to the flesh, of the Messiah. Indeed, already after the exodus from Egypt the tribe of Judah took the lead of the other tribes. When after the death of Joshua the children of Israel asked of the LORD, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?" The LORD said, Judah shall go up." (Judg. i. 1, 2.) The heroic exploits of this tribe, which it achieved at that time, are faithfully recorded in Judg. i. 3-20. When afterwards the children of Israel were, on account of their wickedness, delivered into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, whom they served eight years; and when they cried unto the LORD to deliver them, God chose Othniel of the tribe of Judah, as their first Judge, who, by his glorious victories delivered them from the Mesopotamian oppression. (See Judg. iii. 9, 10.)

In the phrase יְהוּדָה אַתָּה יִרְדּוּךָ אֶחָיִךְ (*Yehudah attah yoducha achecha*), "Judah thou art, thy brethren shall praise thee." There is evidently a play upon the name of Judah, which signifies *praise*, as much as to say, *thy name is Judah, denoting praise, and thy brethren shall praise thee*. And so has the passage been interpreted by the eminent Rabbinic commentator Elen Ezra: "Judah *art* thou; according to thy name, and thus shall thy brethren praise thee." "Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies;" this refers to the victorious career of the tribe of Judah. It is a figurative expression denoting conquest, conveying the idea of a person flying, and the party pursuing putting his hand upon the shoulders of the fugitive to arrest his flight. In the reign of David, the enemies of Judah were brought in complete subjection to him, and he evidently refers to this prophecy when he says: Ps. xviii. 41, (Eng. Ver. v. 40), "And thou hast given me the neck of mine enemies." Onkelos, in his Targum, has given the sense rather than the literal translation, he renders: "Thy hand shall prevail against thine enemies." "The children of thy father shall bow down to thee," *i. e.*, they shall pay to thee the respect and honour, which are due to one who possesses the highest dignity. The fulfilment of this prophecy may be said to have begun at the death of Joshua, when the tribe of Judah by direct command of God took the precedence of the other tribes in the war against the Canaanites, (see Judg. i. 2.) It was still more developed in Judah's assuming the sceptre in the person of David; but, as a writer has well observed, "its complete

accomplishment was to be realized only in the Messiah, in that transcendent dignity with which he is invested as King of kings and Lord of lords." In Revelations v. 5-8, a symbolical representation is given of its spiritual fulfilment, when the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David took the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down in adoration at his feet.

We may remark, that the Hebrew verb שָׁחָה (*shachah*), signifies both to bow down, as before superiors, to pay respect or honour, and to bow down to worship God, and there can therefore be no objection to the spiritual interpretation of the passage. "A lion's whelp is Judah." In the poetical writings of the Old Testament are to be found many beautiful and striking figures drawn from the habits of the lion. This animal being at once powerful, daring, and imposing; hence it has always been the emblem of warlike valour and strength among the eastern nations. In the blessing of Judah, the figures present to us a most graphic description of the gradual growth of that tribe in strength and power. At first Judah is compared to a lion's whelp, indicating its infancy, and probably refers to the period of time when it first assumed the leadership of the others tribes. Next he is compared to a lion that bowed and crouched down. The Hebrew word אָרִיָּה (*aryeh*) denotes a full grown lion, one that has obtained its full vigour and strength. It is derived from the verb אָרָה (*arah*) to tear, so that the word properly means a *tearer in pieces*. In this figure, we have evidently depicted the reign of David, who subdued many nations, and became a mighty monarch, and like a full grown lion which by all other animals is held in fear, he became a terror to his enemies. Lastly, he is compared to a lioness, which, satiated with her prey, composedly lies down in her den, but whose rest, especially when with her young, no one may disturb without suffering for his temerity. This figure evidently portrays the peaceful reign of Solomon, who in calm repose enjoyed with the nation, the fruit of David's victories, but who would have dared to disturb that repose? In the English Version the word לָבִיָּא (*lavi*) is rendered by "old lion;" but Bochart, the best authority on the natural history of the Bible, very properly holds the word to denote a *lioness*, and not a male lion. Gesenius, too, assigns several cogent reasons for adopting the same view; as, for instance, "it being coupled with other names denoting a lion, where it can hardly be a mere synonym;" also that the passages in Job iv. 11; xxxviii. 39, and others, accords much better with the *lioness* than with a lion. It is very probable that Jerusalem may have received the appellation "Ariel," i. e., the lion of God, from its having been the dwelling place of David. See Isaiah xxix. 1: "Woe

to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelled." "From the prey, my son, thou hast gone up." Many commentators take the verb *עלה* (*alah*) in the sense *to grow up*, and render "From thy prey, my son, thou hast grown up," which would then refer to the great power which Judah should acquire by his conquests. But as the verb is generally used only in this sense in reference to plants and grass, I think it is better to take the verb here in its primary meaning *to go up*; the expression will then refer to the lion's returning to his den in the mountains with his prey, and applied to Judah, it would convey the idea that he should return victorious to his secure home with the spoils of his enemies. In verse 10, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah," &c., we have the prophetic declaration, that the temporal dominion or pre-eminence of Judah should not cease until the fulness of time, when the Messiah should come, to whom all nations should render homage. Now, although the prophecy is perfectly plain, yet there are not a few commentators who have endeavoured to construe it in such a manner as would entirely divest it of its Messianic character; and this they do by attaching to some of the words in the original such meaning as will more readily favour their views. It is quite certain that the prophecy admits of but one interpretation, the question then arises, which is the correct one: the Messianic, or anti-Messianic? In order to give a satisfactory reply to this highly important question, it will be necessary in the first place to turn to the original and investigate the true meaning of the words employed; secondly, to examine which of the interpretations agrees best with the context; and thirdly, to consult the various versions that we may see what were the opinions of the different translators from time to time.

The first word we have to consider, is, the word *שֵׁבֶט* (*shevet*) which we have rendered in our passage by "sceptre." The primary meaning of the word is *a staff or rod*, but like very many other Hebrew words, has various other meanings, which are deduced from the primary signification; thus it denotes *a shepherd's crook, a staff of office*, as of a leader or judge, and hence also *a sceptre of a king*. It denotes also *a tribe*, a signification which probably became attached to the word from the circumstance recorded in Numbers xvii., when Moses was commanded to speak to the children of Israel, and to take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers; of all their princes according to their fathers, twelve rods; corresponding to the number of tribes, and to write every man's name upon his rod. These rods Moses laid up in the tabernacle, and it was afterwards perceived that Aaron's rod had budded. Now, as these rods represented the tribes, it is not unlikely that the Hebrew word for *rod* became also to denote a

tribe. Some Jewish writers take the word here in its primary signification, and render "the rod shall not depart from Judah," and explain, that the Hebrews shall be an oppressed and afflicted people until the Messiah shall come. But this certainly cannot be the meaning; the context altogether forbids such an exposition, since the text speaks of the rule which the tribe of Judah should exercise, and not of a foreign rule. It speaks of Judah under the figure of a lion going forth to prey upon foreign nations, and not of foreign nations preying upon Judah. Some interpreters take the word in the sense of *tribe*, but regard it here as equivalent to *tribeship*, implying that the tribe of Judah should continue in the exercise of its wonted tribal authority till the coming of Messiah, however the other tribes might be scattered by conquest or captivity. Of course it would be altogether incongruous to say, *the tribe shall not depart from Judah*, and for attaching to the word the meaning of *tribeship*, there is no authority whatever. The true meaning of the word in our passage no doubt is *sceptre*, as it is rendered in the English Version, and we do not see the slightest reason for departing from that translation, as it is frequently used in that sense, as every Hebrew scholar well knows, and perfectly agrees with the context.

The next word we shall have to notice is מְחַקֵּק (*umechokek*), which has also been variously rendered. Onkelos, in his Targum, (Chaldee version) renders it by סַפְרָא (*saphra*) *scribe*. In the Jerusalem Targum, it is rendered by *skilful teachers of the law*; in the Syrian version, by *an interpreter*; in the Septuagint, by ἡγούμενος, *i. e., a leader*; in the Vulgate, by *dux, i. e., a leader*; and in the Authorized Version, by *a lawgiver*. The proper way to decide which of these various renderings is correct, is to examine in what sense the word is employed in other parts of the Old Testament, which will leave us only the option between the renderings given in the Septuagint and Vulgate Versions, and that given in our Authorized Version, and we consider it of but little importance which of the two we adopt, although we should prefer that of the latter, since that of the former is already implied by the expression *sceptre*. The Hebrew word is the *participle Piel*, but is used substantively, which is very common in the Hebrew. It denotes, 1st., *a lawgiver*, as in Deut. xxxiii. 21, Isa. xxxiii. 22; "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver;" 2nd., *a leader*, as in Judg. v. 14, "Out of Machir, (the name of the son of Manasseh, and father of Gilead, but is here used poetically to denote that portion of Manasseh which inhabited Gilead beyond Jordan) came down rulers," (Eng. Ver., "governors.") But in the sense of *scribe, skilful teacher, or interpreter*, it is nowhere used in the Old Testa-

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ment. From the foregoing remarks, the reader will now perceive that the rendering of the two words which we have given, in our translation is authorized by Scriptural usage. "From between his feet," this is a metaphorical expression, denoting *from his seed*, or *from his offspring*, (for a similar expression, see Deut. xxviii. 57), and is rendered in the Targum of Onkelos, as well as in the Jerusalem Targum, by "from his children's children."

The word that comes next under our consideration is שִׁלֹה (Shiloh), which has called forth a great deal of discussion, both as regards its meaning and application in our passage. Some commentators, both Jewish and Christian, have taken the word *Shiloh* as the name of the city mentioned in Joshua xviii. 1; 1 Sam. iv. 3, 12, and in other places; and translate the passage "until he come to Shiloh," which they explain, that Judah should have precedence until there should come a king out of Judah to renew the kingdom of Shiloh, which is near Shechem. The fulfilment of this they find in Rehoboam, the son of Solomon coming to Shechem where all Israel had assembled to make him king, but on refusing to listen to their prayer to lighten their yoke, acting rather upon the advice of thoughtless young men who had grown up with him, than upon the advice of the old men who stood before his father, the ten tribes rebelled against him, and invited Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, of the tribe of Ephraim, to be their king. (See 1 Kings xii.) The words "unto him shall be the obedience of the nations," they explain by the subjection of the surrounding nations to Solomon, and of Israel assembling at Shechem to crown Rehoboam. Against the above mode of interpreting the passage, we may in the first place remark, that although the ten tribes did throw off their allegiance to the house of David, it cannot be said that the sceptre departed from Judah. Rehoboam and his successors, were as much kings after the rebellion of the ten tribes as those who reigned before them. All that can be said is, that the dominion was greatly curtailed by that event. And, after all, the kingdom of Judah was by no means insignificant, as it embraced, besides the tribe of Judah, which in itself was very large, also the tribe of Benjamin, and the priests and Levites who rallied around the house of David.

Rehoboam could still muster "a hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors," (see 1 Kings xii. 21), which he would have led against the ten tribes in order to bring them again under his sway, had he not received a message from the LORD through Shemaiah, a prophet, commanding him to desist from his design. In the second place, we may observe, that all the most ancient Jewish authorities, as well as many of the most able modern Jewish commenta-

tors understood by the word שִׁילֹה (*Shiloh*), the Messiah. And, in the third place, we may remark, that the passage cannot possibly refer to Rehoboam and the rebellion of the ten tribes, inasmuch as Rehoboam came to Shechem and not to Shiloh, to meet the assembled Israelites. And as for the alleged proximity of the two places, so that any thing done in Shechem might be said to have been done in Shiloh, is a supposition altogether too futile to be worthy of any notice. The ruins of *Scilon*, which mark the ancient site of Shiloh, are at least ten or twelve miles from *Shechem* or *Neapolis*; and Joshua xxiv. upon which those commentators found their supposition, does not in the least indicate that the two places were nearer to each other.

Other commentators attach to the word שִׁילֹה (*Shiloh*) the signification *rest*, and explain the passage, that Judah should retain the sceptre as leader of the tribes until they should come to their final rest in the promised land, when the other tribes would separate from him to receive their own portion. But the argument we have adduced against the former exposition applies with equal force also to this one. Judah did not lay aside the sceptre when they took possession of the land of Canaan. And further, according to this interpretation, the words, "unto him shall be the obedience of the nations," would be altogether meaningless. By far the greatest number of commentators, however, understand by the word *Shiloh*, the Messiah, and interpret the passage, that the dominion should not cease from the posterity of Judah until the Messiah should come, who should establish a kingdom which would have no end. This is no doubt the true import of the phrase before us, and harmonizes beautifully with the other parts of the prophecy. The word שִׁילֹה (*Shiloh*) is derived from the verb שָׁלַח (*Shalah*) to be at rest, and signifies one that gives rest or peace, and thus is synonymous to שַׁר שָׁלוֹם (*sar shalom*) prince of peace, one of the titles applied to the Messiah (Isaiah ix. 5). In the Targum of Onkelos, which is the earliest of the Chaldee versions, and which is held in the highest estimation both by the Jews as well as by Christian scholars, the passage is rendered as follows: "One having dominion shall not depart from Judah, nor a scribe from his children's children forever, עַד דְּיִיתִי מִשִּׁיחָא (*ad deyethe Meshicha*) until the Messiah comes, whose is the kingdom, and Him shall the nations obey."

The Jerusalem Targum, another Chaldee version of the Pentateuch, and which, as already stated, is supposed to have been written about the sixth century of the Christian era, if not more recently, likewise interprets the passage of the coming of the Messiah, and renders "Kings shall not fail from the house of Judah, nor skilful teachers of the law from his chil-

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dren's children, until the time that the King Messiah come, whose is the kingdom, and whom nations shall serve.

In the Syrian Version, generally called *Peshito*, i.e., the *literal* or *true*, and which is one of the oldest translations of the Old Testament, the passage is translated: "The sceptre shall not fail from Judah, nor the Interpreter or expounder from his feet, until he come whose it is, and for him the nations shall wait." This version was probably made in the latter part of the second century, or the earlier part of the third century.

In the Septuagint, which is the oldest version of the Old Testament, the passage is rendered: "A prince shall not fail from Judah, nor a leader out of his loins, until the things come, which are laid up for him," and according to others, "for whom it is laid up." Some of the fathers might well have racked their brains in endeavouring to make sense of this obscure translation, for it would be no easy matter to say with certainty, what is to be understood by the word "things," which is not in the Hebrew text. But obscure as this rendering is, we nevertheless can perceive in it an evident allusion to the coming of the Messiah. By the expression, "until the things come which are laid up" or "reserved for him," the author or authors of this version may probably have meant the things appertaining to the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, which was to be established instead of the secular kingdom of Judah.

From the foregoing quotations of the different versions, it will be seen that they all, more or less, pointedly refer the passage, to the coming of the Messiah, but as so many of our modern writers strenuously labour to divest the passage of its Messianic character, we will adduce a few quotations from the Rabbinical writers, many of whom are equally explicit in their views upon the subject before us. In the Talmud, *tract Sanhedrim*, fol. 98, col. 1, we read Rabbi Milai in the name of Rab'si Eleazar, the son of Simeon said, "The son of David" (i. e., the Messiah) "does not come until all the judges and rulers cease from Israel." This opinion was, no doubt formed upon the prophecy of Jacob, "The sceptre shall not depart," &c. Rabbi Abraham Seba, observes in his book, *Tseror Hammor*, fol. 37, col. 2, *Parashah vayetse*: "Shiloh, signifies the Messiah." The same view is expressed by the celebrated Rabbi Bechai in his commentary on the five books of Moses, fol. 59, Vol. 2, *Parashah vayehi*. Besides these we might cite other Jewish commentators, as Jarchi Nachmanides, &c., but these will suffice to show, that although they differ from the Christian commentators as to the fulfilment of the prophecy, they at least agree with them as to its application to the Messiah. Even the *Cabulists find that

* See for a full account of the Cabbalistic school, vol. I.

the letters in the words **שִׁילֹה יָבֹא** (*Shiloh Yavo*) "Shiloh shall come," afford the same *number* as the letters in the word **מָשִׁיחַ** (*Meshiach*) *Messiah*: as א 1, ב 2, ג 10, ד 5, ה 30, ו 10, ז 300=358; ח 8, ט 10, ק 300, ל 40=358, from which they conclude, that Shiloh and the Messiah are the same

"And unto him *shall be* the obedience of the nations," as the root of the word **יָקָהָת** (*yikhath*) which we have rendered by "obedience," occurs nowhere in the Old Testament, it is not very easy to determine what may be its real meaning in our passage. Accordingly we find that various renderings have been given of it. In the Septuagint the word is rendered by *προσδοκία*, i.e., *expectation*, and so in the Vulgate, *expectatio*; and he shall be the expectation of nations, which certainly affords a suitable meaning. But it is not easily to be seen how this meaning can be obtained. The translators have evidently derived the word from **קָוָה** (*karwah*) *to wait for*, but then the proper form of the noun would be **תִּקְוָה** (*tikwah*), i.e., *hope, expectation*, see Job v. 16; Prov. xxiii. 18, etc., quite a different word from **יָקָהָת** (*yikhath*) as the reader will perceive. And further, to render **וְלֵוֹ** (*welo*), which signifies, *and to him*, or, *and for him*, by "and he" is altogether arbitrary, for in that case **וְהוּא** (*wehu*), i.e., *and he*, should have been employed. In the Syriac Version the word is rendered by "shall wait," as, "and for him the nations shall wait," which conveys precisely the same meaning as that given in the Septuagint and Vulgate, but is decidedly preferable, as it is not open to the last objection advanced against the others.

Still if we admit this translation, we must suppose the word in question to be derived from a verb **קָהָת** (*kahath*), signifying to wait, which does not exist, at least not in any Hebrew writings now extant. Onkelos in his Chaldee Version has rendered the word by "shall obey," as "and him the nations shall obey," a signification which he could only have obtained by deriving the word from the Arabic verb (*wakiha*) i.e. *to obey*.

In the English Version the word is rendered by "gathering," as "and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*," a rendering which has also been adopted by many Jewish commentators. The translators must have derived the word from the Chaldee verb **קָהָה** (*keha*) i.e. *to gather*, or have supposed that such a verb as **קָהָת** (*kahath*) having the meaning to *gather* at one time existed, which would then have been synonymous with the verb **קָהַל** (*kahal*), i.e. *to call together, to assemble*, the verb commonly employed.

Now as the derivation of the word is uncertain, and the context in this instance fails to guide us in determining its

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meaning here, perhaps Prov. xxx. 17, may assist us in ascer-
taining its true meaning, it being the only other place in the
Old Testament where it occurs. We read there, "The eye that
mocketh at a father, and despiseth לִיקַחְתָּ אִם (*likhath em*)
the obedience of a mother," i. e., due to a mother (English
Version, "to obey his mother)," "the ravens of the valley shal'
pick it out." Now, as the meaning "obedience" is very suit-
able in both passages, it appears to us, there can be but little
doubt that it is the true import of the word in question. The
application of the word is, however, not in the least affected,
no matter which of the above renderings of the word we
adopt, as they all with equal force apply to the Messiah;
still the reader will agree with us, that it is hardly consistent
to translate a word in one place as a noun, and in another
place as a verb, as the authors of the English Version have
done in these two instances. In verses 11, 12, the great
fertility of the country which was to fall to the lot of Judah
is set forth in highly figurative and poetical language.
"Binding to the vine his foal, and his ass's colt to the choice
vine;" the vine will be so plentiful in the country which
Judah would inherit, that the people would tie their asses to
it as they would to a common tree. Sir John Chardin, in
speaking of the vines of this place, says, they were so large
that he could scarcely encompass them with his two arms.
Especially noted were the vineyards in the environs of Hebron
and in the valley of Eshcol. The immense clusters of grapes
which the spies brought back (see Num. xiii. 24), afford us
some idea of the luxuriant growth of the vine in the last men-
tioned place. "He washes in wine his garments;" this is a
hyperbolical expression, implying the great fertility of the soil,
and the immense productiveness of the vineyards. Modern
travellers speak of the bunches of grapes in the valley of
Eshcol as being of prodigious size. Daubdon assures us that
some of the bunches weighing from 10 to 12 pounds. (*Voyage*
de la Terre Sainte, ch. xxi.) Foster tells us, that he was
informed by a Religious who lived many years in Palestine,
that there were bunches of grapes in the valley of Hebron, so
large, that two men could scarcely carry one. The wine would
be so plentiful that the people would use it to wash their
clothes as if it were water. A similar hyperbole we have,
1 Kings x. 27; when it is said, that Solomon made silver to
be as stones in the streets of Jerusalem, implying the great
prosperity during his reign. "Sparkling are his eyes from
wine, and white are his teeth from milk." Although "the
sparkling of the eyes" is used in Proverbs xxiii. 29, in reference
to the intemperate use of wine, yet it would be altogether

unsuitable to the context to attach such a meaning to it in our passage, where it undoubtedly is only expressive of *great abundance*. And so the phrase, "And white are his teeth from milk," is expressive of the luxuriant pasture with which the territory of the tribe of Judah would abound, and therefore there would be an abundance of milk.

13. *Zebulun shall dwell on the coast of the *seas ;
And he shall be for a haven of ships ;
And his border shall extend unto Zidon.*

The name זְבולֹן (*Zebulun*) denotes a dwelling. Why so called see Gen. xxx. 20. Jacob, in his prophetic vision, foresaw that Zebulun would occupy a much greater political position than Issachar, we therefore find him here introduced before his elder brother. Indeed, in the time of Moses, the tribe of Zebulun had already increased so greatly above the tribe of Issachar, that Moses, in the blessing of the tribes, in pronouncing the benediction conjointly on the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar, apparently addressed the former alone ; "And of Zebulun he said." (Deut. xxx. 18). The tract of country which fell to the lot of the tribe of Zebulun was very extensive, extending in the east to the sea of Tiberias, and in the west to Mount Carmel and the Mediterranean, or the borders of Phœnicia, here 'represented like in other places by Zidon. The tribe of Zebulun was brave, and is spoken of in the song of Deborah with great praise ; "Zebulun is a people delivering up his soul in the heights of the field." (Judg. v. 18). But besides being a warlike people, it engaged also extensively in mercantile pursuits, and seems to have enjoyed great prosperity. The great prosperity of the tribe of Zebulun was briefly though emphatically foretold by Moses : "Rejoice Zebulun in thy going out." (Deut. xxx. 18). In the Talmud the great wealth of this tribe is also often spoken of. The chief article of their commerce seems to have been costly purple dyes called אַרְגָּמָן (*argeman*) *Argaman*, or stuff coloured with it. The dye was obtained from the juice of shell-fish common on the Syrian coast. It is also by many believed that they manufactured and exported glass, supposed to be alluded to by Moses in the words :

"For they shall seek the abundance of the seas,
And the hidden treasures of the sand."

(Deut. xxxiii. 19.)

*Both in the Authorized Version and in the Revised Version, the singular "sea" is given, but in the original the plural noun יַמִּים (*yammim*) "seas" is employed, which is explained by the territory extending from the sea of Tiberias to the Mediterranean.

14. *Issachar is a bony (robust) ass,
Lying down between two folds :
And he saw rest that it was good,
And the land that it was pleasant ;
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a servant (subject) to tribute.*

Issachar, the name denotes, *he will bring reward*, and why so called, see Gen. xxx. 18. In this prophetic declaration Jacob not only indicates the fertile and beautiful territory which would fall to the lot of the tribe of Issachar, but also the character of its people. There is nothing disparaging much less offensive in Issachar being compared to a bony or robust ass, as this animal was rather held in esteem by the ancient Hebrews, and people of the first quality rode on asses, (Comp. Judg. v. 10 ; x. 4 ; xii. 14.) The simile is intended merely to convey that the men of Issachar would be distinguished for their gentleness, patience, and capability of endurance. "Lying down between two folds." The ancient folds were made into two compartments, one for the large cattle, and the other for the small, and between the two the shepherd laid down at night, and thus the expression "to lie down between two folds," gradually became a proverbial saying, expressing *ease and comfort*. In the Authorized Version the word מִשְׁפָּתִים (*mishpethayim*) which has the *dual* form, is rendered by "two burdens," but in Judg. v. 16, the same word is rendered by "sheepfolds." *Sheepfolds* is, no doubt, the proper meaning of the word, as derived from the verb שָׁפַת (*shaphat*) to place, to fix, and the passage is correctly rendered in the Revised Version: "Couching down between the sheepfolds." There are other renderings given of the word, but with which we need not trouble the reader. We may, however, notice the ingenious explanation given of our passage by Goethe, who takes the two folds to refer to the two ranges of mountains enclosing the beautiful and fertile vale of Esdraelon, which the tribe of Issachar received for its inheritance, and thus Issachar might be said to have lain down between two folds. "And he saw rest that it was good." The territory which was allotted to the tribe of Issachar, was mountainous in the eastern and southern parts, but in the centre it contained the most delightful and fertile valleys of the Holy Land, the chief of these being Jezreel, Megiddo, and Esdraelon. (See Joseph. Wars of the Jews, B. iii. ch. iii. par. 2.) The whole territory abounded in richest pasture, the hilly parts as well as the plains, and this, no doubt, induced the tribe of Issachar to follow to a great extent a pastoral life, which is aptly expressed in Jacob's prophetic declaration: "Lying down between two folds." In the territory of Issachar

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was fought the chief battle against Sisera by the waters of Megiddo (see Judg. v. 19), and the bravery of the men of this tribe is spoken of with great praise by Deborah (see Judg. v. 15). Indeed, it is generally believed that the heroine herself belonged to this tribe, for in Judg. v. 15, she speaks of the nobles or leaders of Issachar as שָׂרֵי (Sarai), "my nobles" or "leaders."

In course of time, however, their peaceful occupations of tending the flocks and agricultural pursuits, made them gradually lose their warlike propensities, and made them indifferent to military fame. Josephus, speaking of Issachar's inheritance, says: "It is fruitful to admiration, abounding in pastures and nurseries of all kinds, so that it would make any man in love with husbandry." We can, therefore, readily understand Joseph's prophetic declaration, "and he saw rest that it was good," &c., "and became a servant (subject) to tribute." Many commentators explain this passage merely to mean that the tribe having given itself up to agricultural pursuits, it became subject to the hard labour attending husbandry. But the language undoubtedly implies the payment of self-imposed tribute for some benefits or services received. It is, therefore, highly probable, that although the men of the tribe of Issachar were always ready to come forward in the defence of the country, yet preferring to enjoy ease to taking part in warlike pursuits which were often necessary in order to repel the attacks of hostile neighbours, or marauding hordes, they found it necessary to place themselves under the protection of the more warlike tribes of Zebulun and Ephraim, who are specially spoken of as "mighty men of valour, and as men that would set the battle in array," (1 Chron. 30, 33,) and for the services rendered by these tribes, they paid a tribute, and thus it may be said of Issachar that he "became subject to tribute." The men of the tribe of Issachar seemed to be also distinguished for shrewdness, so much so, that the other tribes sought their councils, for we read in 1 Chron. xii. 32, "And of the children of Issachar, *who were men* that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them *were* two hundred, and all their brethren *were* at their command (or as the original has it וְכָל אֶחָדָם עַל פִּיהֶם (*wechol achehem al pihem*) "and all their brethren *were* at their mouth," i. e., followed the words of their mouth. The bony ass, quietly lying down between two folds, to which Issachar is compared, forms a most vivid contrast to the פָּרָא (*pere*) wild ass, which roams about, and is attacked by every one that meets it, and to which Ishmael is compared, (see Gen. xvi. 12).

16. *Dan shall judge his people
As one of the tribes of Israel.*

17. *Dan shall be a serpent by the way,
An adder in the path,
That biteth the heels of the horse,
So that its rider falleth backward.*

We have in the words דן ירין (*Dan yadin*) "Dan shall judge," a paranomasia or play of words which cannot be expressed in the translation; the *name* and the *verb* being derived from the same root. The meaning of the passage, "Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel," is not very clear. As Dan was the son of Bilhah, many commentators explain the passage merely to declare, that though only the son of Rachel's maid, yet was to be on the same equality with the sons of Rachel and Leah. Whilst others explain that Dan would be as able as any of the other tribes to govern himself by his own Judges, and maintain his own interest. But all this would hold equally good with the other sons born by the maid servants. It is therefore more likely that the passage has a direct reference to the hero Samson who belonged to the tribe of Dan, of whom it is said that "he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years," (Judg. xv. 20.) The words "Dan shall judge his people," must, therefore, not be understood merely to mean, *the people of Dan*, but *the whole of Israel*. That the ancient Jews understood our passage to refer to Samson, is evident from the paraphrase that is given of it in the Targum of Onkelos: "In the tribe of Dan there shall be chosen and raised up a man, and in his days his people shall be delivered." In like manner the most eminent Rabbinic commentators, as well as many modern Christian interpreters, have held the passage to refer to Samson, and we may therefore safely conclude that in this illustrious son of the tribe of Dan we have the fulfilment of the Patriarch's prophetic declaration regarding the tribe of Dan, which although couched in highly poetic diction is yet quite clear. The portion which fell to the tribe of Dan, had the country of the Philistines on the west. The proximity of the Philistines who were constantly at war with the Israelites, explains many circumstances in the history of Samson, and affords also an explanation of verse 17, in which Dan is compared to a serpent lurking in the way side. The Philistines were a powerful enemy with which the tribe of Dan could hardly hope to cope successfully in open warfare, it was therefore obliged to have recourse to cunningly devised strategy. As a proof of the cunning devices adopted by this tribe in warfare, we may refer to Samson who always conquers, and yet there is no record of his ever having led an army of his countrymen against the enemy, but by cunning devices and personal exertions achieved the most memorable and daring

deeds. A striking illustration of the artful mode of warfare carried on by the people of Dan is given in Judges xviii. It appears that in course of time the tribe of Dan had so greatly increased in population, that the territory originally assigned to it, proved too small, and as there was no possibility of extending its territory, as it was on three sides bounded by other tribes, and on the fourth by the Philistines, who were too powerful for them, they determined to seek for a suitable settlement in the far north. For this purpose they sent five spies who came to the city Laish, whose inhabitants were Sidonians, a quite, inoffensive people, and who having no enemies near them, and trusting in the protection of Sidon, thought themselves perfectly secure. The spies at once perceived that there was a favourable opportunity of taking the place by surprise, they therefore returned to their brethren, and reported what they had seen, urging them to go up against the people; that the land was very good and large, and that the people "dwelled very carelessly." Accordingly they sent six hundred armed men who surprised the city, smote its inhabitants, and burned the city. Here we have the viper lurking in the path, inflicting a deadly blow on the unsuspecting victim. The serpent to which Dan is compared is in the original called שפִּיפּוֹן (*shephiphon*) which Bochart, the best authority on the natural history of the Bible clearly shows to be the *cerastes* or *arrow snake* (*serpens jaculus*) which lurks in the sand, and frequently in the tracks of wheels, and which, on account of its grey colour, is not easily seen, but suddenly darts forth, and attacks with a deadly bite anything that comes near it. So deadly has the bite of this serpent been regarded among the ancients, that they superstitiously believed that if a man on horseback was to kill one with a spear, "the poison would run up the weapon, and kill both horse and rider," (Pliny viii. 33. See also the reference given in Gesenius's Thes.) Those of the tribe of Dan who took up their abode in the conquered northern district, built a city, and called its name "Dan, after the name of their progenitor," which gave rise to the familiar proverbial expression, "from Dan to Beersheba," (Judg. xxi. 1.) indicating the extent of the Promised Land, Beersheba being situated in the southernmost part of Canaan. The city Dan became afterwards noted for the worship of the golden calf which Jeroboam set up, (see 1 Kings xviii. 29-31.) and this leaning towards idolatry gradually led to private and social intercourse between the Philistines and the Danites, which resulted in the tribe sinking into such utter insignificance, that its name was altogether omitted in later enumerations of the tribes. (See 1 Chron. iv., and following chapters; and Rev. vii.)

18. *For thy salvation I have waited (or looked for) O LORD !*

The reader will perceive that this devout ejaculation is here abruptly introduced apparently without any connection with what precedes or follows: this has led many of our modern commentators to regard the whole verse as an interpolation of a copyist. Thus, for instance, Vater, Bauer, Maurer, Von Bohlen, &c. They say that "the pious acclamation was probably placed by some devout Hebrew in the margin of his manuscript, and through the carelessness of some copyist has made its way into the text." Now, whilst we admit that at first sight its introduction there is anything but clear, yet when we come to examine the context more closely, it will be found that it harmonizes beautifully with what precedes. The supposition that it is an interpolation we may at once say is altogether refuted by the fact that the passage occurs in all the ancient versions, which fully establishes its authenticity. The abrupt introduction of the passage, we think, is best explained: that the pious patriarch, in predicting what would befall his descendants after they had taken possession of the promised land, plainly saw the severe conflicts that awaited the Israelites, but remembering the many dangers from which he had been delivered by the Divine aid of Jehovah, he expresses here his confidence that the same Divine protection would also be vouchsafed to his descendants. The prayer is very appropriately offered up immediately after the prophetic declaration regarding the tribe of Dan, who, as we have above stated, from the close vicinity of the Philistines, was in constant danger of being attacked by them, and who, indeed, never ceased to vex them whenever the slightest opportunity offered itself. It has been well said that "in this prayer Jacob furnished his sons with both shield and sword." Some commentators find in our passage *the theme* of the prayer uttered by Samson when brought before the assembled Philistines: "O LORD God remember me, I pray thee," &c. (Judges xvi. 28.) Others again account for the introduction of the passage here, that "the decrepit patriarch, fearing his strength might fail him before he could finish his blessings, uttered this prayer for God's help." But the explanation we have given seems to us to be the correct one. And further, we can even see no objection to extend the application, that whilst praying for the assistance of Jehovah to his harrassed descendants, the dying patriarch's mind was at the same time occupied with the contemplation of that eternal deliverance which was to be wrought by the Messiah. Indeed the ancient Hebrews have apparently regarded this pious ejaculation of Jacob as Messianic, for the Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan, which generally reflect the views of

the ancient Hebrews, have paraphrased the passage as follows, "I look for thy salvation, O Lord, said our father Jacob. I look not for the deliverance of Gideon, the son of Joash, because it is a temporal deliverance; nor for the deliverance of Samson, the son of Manoah, because that is transitory; but I look for the Messiah, the son of David, which thou through thy word hast promised to bring to thy people the children of Israel: for this thy redemption my soul longs for." The word יְשׁוּעָה (*yeshuah*) signifies both *temporal* and *spiritual deliverance*.

19. *Gad, a troop will press on him,
But he will press them on their heel (i. e., in the rear.)*

The tribe of Gad, at the time of the conquest of the promised land, counted 45,650 warriors. The Gadites were a warlike people, and formed the vanguard of the army of the Israelites. Moses, in blessing the children of Israel before his death, bestowed nearly as much eulogy on the tribe of Gad as on the tribe of Judah (see Deut. xxxiii. 20, 21). In reward for the bravery which they had shown they were allowed to choose as their portion of inheritance a famous pastoral district in Gilead beyond Jordan, to which they returned after having assisted their brethren to conquer the country west of Jordan, and gave themselves up to breeding cattle, for which the country was particularly suitable. This occupation, laid them open to constant trouble from their neighbouring enemies, and wandering Arabian hords, and particularly from the Ammonites, who looked upon the Gadites as having deprived them of their country. In Josh. xiii. 25, the land of Gad is spoken of as "half the land of the children of Ammon." The Ammonites were a constant scourge to the Gadites who had always to be ready, and on the alert. Indeed, the Ammonites at one time succeeded to force the Gadites for a short time into servitude, but by their bravery, and with the assistance of the tribes of Reuben and Manasseh they again gained their liberty. (Compare 1 Chron. v. 18-22). "But he will press *them* on their heel," (*i. e., in the rear*); this has evidently reference to the tactics they would make use of in their warfare with their enemies, in enticing them into their country, and then attack them in the rear. Later the Gadites distinguished themselves by the assistance they rendered to David, who rewarded them for it by bestowing upon them some important offices. Thus we read, 1 Chron. 12, 8, "And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David, to the hold in the wilderness, men of might, *and* men of war *fit* for battle, that could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and they were as swift as the roes upon the mountains." Moses, in his blessing the Israelites,

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had already compared the Gadites to "a lion," "Blessed is he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lioness, and teareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head." (Deut. xxxiii. 20). The territory of the tribe of Gad contained several cities famous in the history of the patriarchs, but what invested this territory with peculiar sanctity and reverence was, that it contained the grave of Moses, and was, therefore, looked upon as one of the most honoured parts of the Holy Land.*

20. *Out of Asher his bread will be fat,
And he shall yield royal dainties.*

This prophetic declaration clearly foretells that the inheritance which fell to the lot of the tribe of Asher, was to be of extraordinary fertility. Moses repeats the blessing in Deut. xxxiii. 24, in different words:

"Blessed be Asher with children (or above sons),
He shall be the delight of his brethren,
And shall dip his feet in oil."

The territory of the tribe of Asher was situated in the north-western part of Palestine, bordered on the west by the Mediterranean, and on the north by Lebanon. Although the maritime position of this tribe was favourable for carrying on an extensive commerce, yet the extraordinary richness of the soil, seemed to have afforded greater inducements in the culture of the land. The products of the country were wine, corn, and oil, which were produced not only in great abundance, but also in such great excellence as to be fit for the supplying of the royal tables. The dainties which Asher was able to supply made him "the delight of his brethren." We have already stated that "bread is often used for all kinds of food," and "fat" expresses great excellency of anything.

21 *Naphtali is a hind let loose:
That uttereth words of beauty.*

"Naphtali is a hind let loose," (or a freely roaming, or as it may be rendered also, "a fleet hind,") in these words the Patriarch predicts that the men of Naphtali would be distinguished for their *activity*. Yet although celebrated for activity, they

* We have in our verse the most beautiful *paranomasia*, or play of words, found in Scripture. Of the six words contained in the verse, four bear a similar sound, though of different meaning. גַּד גְּדוּד יְגֻדֶנּוּ וְהוּ יַגֻּד אֵכֶר. (Gad gedud yegudennu wehu yagud akev). The reader not familiar with Hebrew will perceive the play of words from the Hebrew words expressed in English. Gad, Gad; gedud, a troop; yegudennu, shall press on him; wehu, but he; yagud, shall press (them on their) akev, rear.

apparently wanted self-reliance. According to Judges i. 33, they left several of their cities in the hands of the Canaanites. This want of self-assurance is strikingly apparent in the conduct of Barak from the town of Kedesh in the tribe of Naphtali. The reader will remember when he was invited by Deborah to take the leadership of the Hebrew army, he said: "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go." (Judg. iv. 8.) Still, when the men of Naphtali were once in action they not only displayed great activity, but also great courage, they were "a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death, upon the high places of the field." (Judg. v. 18.) The territory which this tribe inherited, was a wooded mountainous country in the northern part of Palestine, exceedingly fertile, so that Moses in his blessing of the tribe, says: "Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD." (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) Josephus furnishes a most glowing description of the almost unprecedented productiveness of this part of the country. He remarks: "Its nature is wonderful as well as its beauty; its soil is so fruitful, that all sorts of trees can grow upon it." And further on he remarks: "One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces, those plants which are naturally enemies to one another to agree together: it is a happy combination of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country: for it not only nourishes different sorts of autumnal fruit beyond men's expectation, but preserves them a great while; it supplies men with the principal fruits, with grapes and figs continually during ten months of the year, and the rest of the fruits as they become ripe together, through the whole year, for besides the good temperature of the air, it is also watered from a most fertile fountain." Well, indeed, might Moses say: "Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD."

"That uttereth words of beauty"; these words have no doubt reference to some *poetical* or *oratorical talent* for which the people of this tribe were to be noted. The fine scenery and great fruitfulness of their territory, their active life, may have largely contributed to foster a taste among them for poetry. Though Scripture affords us no information to enable us to speak positively on this subject, yet we have at least a fine specimen of high poetical genius in the eloquent and stirring triumphal song, (Judges v.), which was sung by Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam after the victory obtained over Jabin and Sisera. Barak, as we have already stated, belonged to the tribe of Naphtali. We may here also note the paraphrase given of our passage in the Jerusalem Targum (a Chaldee version of the Pentateuch) which originated about the sixth century of the Christian era, it is as follows: "And when

he (Naphtali) opened his mouth in the congregation of Israel his tongue was sweet as honey." This rendering at least shows that there existed among the Jews at that time a tradition, that the tribe of Naphtali had been noted for its poetical genius.

22. *A fruitful bough is Joseph,
A fruitful bough by a well ;
His branches spread over the wall.*
23. *And the archers harassed him,
And shot at him, and hated him.*
24. *But his bow abode in strength ;
And the arms of his hands remained firm,
From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
From thence, from the shepherd, the Rock of Israel.*
25. *From the God of thy father who shall help thee,
And by the Almighty, who shall bless thee,
With blessings of heaven from above,
And with blessings of the deep lying beneath,
With blessings of the breasts and of the womb.*
26. *The blessings of thy father prevail
Above the blessings of the eternal mountains,
Above the delight of the everlasting hills :
May they come on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of the prince among his brethren.*

Jacob now turns to his favourite son Joseph, who stands among his brethren a ruler of Egypt, and awards to him, in his sons, the double portion which he had taken from his first-born son Reuben. The benediction bestowed on Joseph embraces a variety of blessings. "A fruitful bow (lit. a fruitful son) is Joseph"; by a Hebrew idiom, a branch of a tree being dependent upon the trunk, is said to be *the son* or *daughter* of it. The declaration in the passage predicts the rapid growth of the population of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. A similar figurative expression implying fecundity occurs in Ps. cxxviii. 3, "Thy wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house." "A fruitful bough by a well (or fountain)," the moisture which the "well" affords not only prevents the foliage from withering from the great heat of the summer months without any rain, but increases also the fruitfulness. In Psalm i. 3, the righteous is compared to "a tree planted by the streams of water." And in Jeremiah xvii. 7, 8, "the man that trusteth in the LORD," is said to be "as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out his roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but his leaf shall

be green: and shall not be careful in the year of drouth, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." "His branches (Heb. "daughters") spread over the wall;" watered by the fountain, and protected by the wall, the branches luxuriantly spread over the wall. The strong "bough" in the first clause is in the original expressed by "בֵּן" (*ben*) a son, whilst the young and tender "branches" in the second clause are beautifully expressed by "בָּנוֹת" *(*banoth*) daughters. The branches spreading over the wall, forcibly depicts the swelling of the populations of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, which rendered an extension of their allotted territory necessary. And how literally this prediction has been fulfilled, may be seen from Joshua xvii. 14-18, to which we refer the reader. "And the archers harass him"; this prediction plainly refers to the constant attacks to which Ephraim and Manasseh would be exposed from the neighbouring Arabian tribes and the Canaanites. The Arabians were proverbially expert bowmen, we can, therefore, understand why the enemies with whom Ephraim and Manasseh would have to contend, are spoken of as "archers." But though the conflicts would be frequent, and the foes powerful and expert; yet by the help of "the Mighty One of Jacob, the weapons of the armies of the tribes would "abide in strength," and the arms of their hands "remain firm," so that they would always be victorious. "With blessings of heaven from above," that is, with rain in its proper season and with copious dew, without which every thing would be burned up during the hot summer months when no rain falls. Moses repeats this blessing more in detail in Deut. xxxiii. 13-17, to which we refer the reader. "And with blessings lying beneath," that is, with springs, brooks, and rivers, to render the land more productive and sure. "With blessings of the breasts and of the womb," it is a numerous posterity; compare the opposite expression, Hosea ix. 14. "The blessings of thy father נִבְרָר (*gaveru*) prevail, or "they are strong," or "durable above the blessings of the eternal mountains," &c.; various interpretations have been given of these words, but the rendering of the Septuagint Version no doubt conveys the proper meaning of the patriarch's declaration, "He had made the blessings of thy father and thy mother more durable than the blessings of perpetual mountains, and more permanent than the blessings

* It will be seen on referring to the original that the plural noun בָּנוֹת (*banoth*) daughters is followed by the singular verb צִמְדָה (*tsaidah*) spread, it is a Hebraism which occurs some times when the noun does not denote a person. For other examples see Ps. xviii. 35; Job xxvii. 20; Ezek. xxvii. 2; and in a few other places. בָּנוֹת (*banoth*) being here figuratively used to express branches.

of everlasting hills." And many modern interpreters have adopted a similar rendering. The Septuagint and Samaritan Versions have added "thy mother," which, however, does not occur in any Hebrew copy. In the Authorized and Revised Versions, verse 25 is rendered somewhat differently to the rendering which we have given, namely: "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills"; though the latter Version in a marginal note says: "According to some ancient authorities, *the blessings of the ancient mountains*, the desire (or desirableness) of the everlasting hills."

The rendering of the English Version has been adopted from the Chaldee Version of Onkelos, the Syriac and Vulgate Versions, where the word הָרַי (*horai*) is rendered by "my progenitors," and the word עַל (*ad*) regarded as the preposition "unto," and read with the following words. Luther, in his German Version, has also adopted this rendering, and so likewise some modern commentators. There are, however, several cogent reasons why this rendering is not admissible. In the first place, it is very ambiguous. What are we to understand by Jacob's blessings prevailing above the blessings of his progenitors? Those commentators who adopted this rendering were evidently at a loss how to explain it, for they merely suggest that the meaning probably is, "that the blessing of Jacob when superadded to those of his forefathers, formed as it were a blessing cumulative that made it emphatically strong." We need hardly say that the rendering given in the English Version admits of no such construction being forced upon it. If the language there given means anything, it implies that Jacob's blessings are superior to those of his forefathers, and we can hardly think it probable that Jacob would magnify the blessings he bestowed on Joseph above those which had been made to himself, or above the glorious promises which his forefather Abraham had received from God. In the second place, the rendering of the Authorized Version would destroy the beautiful parallelism "eternal mountains" and "everlasting hills," and we have already had occasion to state that in the poetical writings, parallelism must not be left out of consideration in cases where the meaning of a passage may be doubtful. In the third place, in the corresponding blessing of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 15), the expressions הָרַי קִדְם (*harere kedem*) "ancient mountains," and גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם (*givoth olam*) "everlasting hills," are employed, which alone is sufficient to determine that the words *הָרַי עַל (*horai ad*) in our passage must be rendered by

* As regards the peculiar form of הָרַי (*horai*) it must be regarded as a

ear of drought,
"His branches
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ural noun בְּנוֹת
(*tsa'idah*) spread,
does not denote a
; Ezek. xxvi. 2;
ratively used to

"eternal mountains," as corresponding to "ancient mountains" in the blessing of Moses. In Hab. iii. 6, a similar parallelism occurs:

"And the eternal mountains were scattered,
The everlasting hills did bow."

"And on the crown of the head of the prince among his brethren"; Joseph stood among his brethren the viceroy of Egypt. The word נָזִיר (*nesir*) is evidently a denominative of נָזַר (*neser*) a *diadem*, and thus denotes *one who wears a crown, a prince*. In the Targum of Jonathan it is paraphrased, "The man who is prince and ruler in Egypt."

27. *Benjamin is a wolf that will tear in pieces:
In the morning he will devour the prey:
And at even he will divide the spoil.*

In this prophetic declaration the patriarch foretells in the most graphic manner possible the warlike character of the tribe of Benjamin. "Benjamin is a wolf;" the habits of the wolf are so well known that a lengthy explanation is unnecessary. The appetite of the wolf for animal food is most vehement, and the means he takes to satisfy his appetite are the most various. Nature has furnished this animal with all the requisites for overtaking and conquering its prey, with strength, cunning, and agility. When pressed with hunger it is heedless of danger. The tribe of Benjamin was situated between the two powerful tribes of Ephraim and Judah, and, therefore, could hardly be expected ever to attain any considerable power. Indeed it required great energy even to hold its own, and preserve its independence. It was but a small tribe, but what it lacked in numerical strength, was to a very great extent made up by its indomitable courage and energy. A striking example is furnished in Judg. xix.-xxi., where we find this insignificant tribe not hesitating to combat against all the other tribes, and indeed gaining at first several great victories over vastly superior armies than their own. They would, however, at the end have been annihilated, had it not been for the forbearance of the other tribes. Another instance of great bravery we have in the daring act of the Benjamite Ehud, a judge of Israel, who by a cunningly devised plan slew Eglon, king of Moab, to whom the

poetical form for נָזִיר (*hare*), and that הָזִיר (*hor*) is an old form for הָזַר (*har*). The word עַד (*ad*) is not the preposition *unto*, but the substantive of the same form denoting *eternity, everlasting*, equivalent to עוֹלָם (*olam*). (Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 15; Ps. ix. 19.) According to the Masoretic accentuation עַד (*ad*) is read with the following words, but there are other instances of palpable wrong accentuation, no doubt caused through the carelessness of the copyists.

Israelites were tributary, through which deed they obtained their independence which they enjoyed for eighty years. (See Judg. iii. 15-30). The ambition of this little tribe, however, was gratified in the royal dignity conferred on Saul. The men of the tribe of Benjamin were famous as being excellent archers, and expert in slinging stones at a hair's breadth, and not miss. (See Judg. xx. 16). The fertility of the territory of the tribe of Benjamin was not inferior to any of the possessions of the other tribes; it was rich in springs, and contained several beautiful valleys, and abounded in palm and balsam trees, and even the rocky hills were rendered exceedingly fertile by industry. The fact also that the hills of Zion and Moriah partly belonged to this tribe as well as to Judah, increased greatly its importance, and thus it is, that Jerusalem is sometimes ascribed to Judah and sometimes to Benjamin. Compare Josh. xv. 63; xviii. 28; Judg. i. 21; Ps. lxxiii. 68). It enables us also to understand the blessing pronounced by Moses upon this tribe:

"Of Benjamin he said,
The blessed of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him:
He covered him all the day long,
And he dwelleth between his shoulder." (Deut. xxxiii. 12.)

Rendered by Luther in his German Version: "The beloved of the Lord will dwell safely, he will protect him at all times, and dwell between his shoulders." Similar, Rabbi Shalom Hakkohen in his German Version for the Jews: "The beloved of the Lord, protected by Him, will dwell in safety," &c. Onkelos explains: "For the Divine Majesty shall dwell in his country," that is, in the temple upon Mount Moriah in the tribe of Benjamin. "In the morning he will devour the prey, and at even he will divide the spoil." The wolf generally goes in search of prey in the evening or at night; hence Jeremiah says: "Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, a wolf of the evening shall spoil them," (ch. v. 61); and Habakkuk says: "Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves," (ch. i. 8). But he will attack and tear his victim, whenever an opportunity offers. The passage as applied to the tribe of Benjamin, denote its pertinacious addictedness to warfare, which it will display, already at the "morning" or beginning of the Jewish state, and continue to practise it to "the evening," or end of it.

28. *All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spoke unto them, and blessed them: every one, according to his blessing, he blessed them.*

"All these are the twelve tribes of Israel," &c., that is, all these are the heads or founders of the twelve tribes, and the

prophetic declarations which he made to them were precisely in accordance to what would happen to them in future days. Our adverse critics have urged that the language "every one, according to his blessing," was not appropriate at least as regards Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, since these received unfavorable predictions; but we have already shown, that general assertions are sometimes made of a whole body which do not strictly apply to every individual of it. Yet, even in respect to these three, it cannot be said that the predictions were wholly devoid of blessing. True, Reuben was not to excel, being deprived of his birthright, still he formed one of the twelve tribes, and had a share in the allotment of the promised land. So Simeon and Levi, though scattered, still had their inheritance among their brethren.

Modern critics have laboured hard and displayed much ingenuity in their endeavour to divest the predictions contained in our chapter of their prophetic character, but so far have not adduced a single substantial argument. Their theory which assigns to the chapter a later date, is altogether based upon mere conjecture. The fact that Jacob uttered the prediction merely to the founders of the tribes, and several centuries before they were accomplished, remains still unshaken.

29. *And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave which is in the field of Ephron the Hittite.*

Jacob had already charged Joseph to bury him in the land of Canaan, in the cave which is in the field of Ephron, and made him solemnly promise that he would carry out his wishes (see ch. xlvii. 20-31), but he now makes the same charge to all his sons, requesting them all to take part in his burial, wishing no doubt thereby to shew them that he cherished no ill feelings towards any one of them, but loved them all. He may have also hoped that by their uniting in the performance of the solemn act, their brotherly feeling might become more firmly cemented.

30. *And when Jacob had finished charging his sons, he gathered his feet into the bed, and expired, and was gathered to his people.*

"He was gathered to his people"; this language clearly indicates the existence of a future state: it clearly implies that "his people" existed, or how could he be said to have been gathered to them. It is quite evident that the expression, "he was gathered to his people," cannot mean *he was buried with his people*, for it stands in close connection with וַיָּיָגְוָה (*waiyigwa*) "and he expired", whereas his removal from Egypt

to the land of Canaan for burial did not take place until the seventy days of mourning had passed. The language can therefore mean nothing else but that as soon as Jacob had breathed out his life, his spirit was gathered with the spirits of his people in שְׁאוֹל (*sheol*), the blessed region of departed souls.

CHAPTER L.

1. *And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.*

The language in our verse describes in a most forcible manner how deeply Joseph felt the death of his father. No sooner are the eyes of his beloved parent closed in death than he throws himself upon the lifeless body, weeping upon it, and kissing it.

2. *And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.*

"His servants the physicians," that is, the physicians attached to his family, and are therefore here spoken of as "his servants." It may, perhaps, appear strange that Joseph should have a number of family physicians, but this is accounted for that in Egypt a physician attends only to one kind of disease (comp. Herod. ii. 84), and therefore every great family, as well as every city, must necessarily require a large number of doctors.

3. *And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those that are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.*

The time mentioned in our verse as occupied in embalming Jacob, coincides with the time mentioned by Diodorus in his account of the Egyptian mode of embalming. He observes: "They prepare the body first with cedar oil and various other substances, more than thirty days, (according to another reading forty days), then, after they have added myrrh and cinnamon and other drugs which have not only the power of preserving the body for a long time, but of imparting also a pleasant odor to it, they give it to the relatives of the deceased. (Comp. Diod. i. 91. See also Hengstenberg, Egypt and the Books of Moses, p. 71.) Herodotus, in his account of the Egyptian mode of embalming, gives "seventy days" as the time generally occupied in embalming, but he evidently refers

to some other mode of embalming, probably one practised at a different period. There seems to have been three different modes of embalming or mummification. The cost of the most expensive one was about \$1,200. The second mode of embalming was a far more inexpensive process, costing only about \$500. The third mode, which was employed by the poor classes, was a very cheap process, no costly articles being employed. The seventy days of mourning includes the forty days occupied in the process of embalming. The mourning for the patriarch was not confined merely to his family, but, according to our verse, all Egypt participated in it, "and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days," which was the customary time among the ancient Egyptians for lamentation for the dead. Joseph had been a great benefactor to Egypt, and the inhabitants evidently felt grateful for what he had done for them, and seeing how greatly their lord loved his father, they thought that this tribute of respect to his deceased parent could not fail to be highly pleasing to him. It was an expression of love and gratitude which must indeed have been exceedingly gratifying to Joseph. Modern rulers might well draw a wholesome lesson from the conduct of the Egyptians on this occasion.

4. *And when the days of his mourning were passed, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh saying, I, I pray you, I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,*

5. *My father made me swear, saying, Behold, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now, therefore, let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will return again.*

It may appear strange that Joseph, who was next to the king in power, should ask the intervention of subordinate officers to obtain permission from the king to go and bury his father; and some writers have erroneously supposed that Joseph's power had been curtailed after the famine had passed. The true explanation no doubt is, that it was not permissible to appear in mourning attire in the presence of royalty, and he therefore asked the courtiers to obtain the permission for him. So Mordecai could not come in the king's presence so long as he wore mourning apparel, "for none might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth." (Esth. iv. 2; compare also Gen. xii. 14).

6. *And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.*

"According as he made thee swear." Pharaoh, in his reply, seems to lay stress on the oath which Joseph had made, as much

as to say, thou hast made a solemn oath to thy father, and it must not be violated, therefore, "Go up, and bury thy father."

7. *And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt.*

Pharaoh not only readily gave his consent for Joseph to go up into the land of Canaan to bury his father, but he further showed his esteem for his viceroy by ordering all the officers of his court, and the officers of state, to accompany the funeral train, which was composed of Joseph's household, the households of his brothers, and the household of the deceased patriarch (v. 8), which altogether formed "a very great company" (v. 9). The funeral procession was rendered still more imposing by its being accompanied by "chariots and horsemen" (v. 9). It must indeed have been a great gratification to Joseph to see the memory of his beloved parent so greatly honoured.

10. *And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and there they lamented with a great and very vehement lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.*

The locality of the threshing-floor of Atad cannot now be fixed with any certainty. It was, however, evidently situated within the borders of the land of Canaan, for according to verse 11, the Canaanites saw the great lamentation. The journey from the district of Goshen would occupy from eight to ten days. The threshing-floors were flat places in open fields, and were often called after the owners. When the funeral train arrived at the threshing-floor, it halted, and renewed the mourning for seven days.

11. *And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a vehement mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore was its name called Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.*

The vehement expression of grief evinced by the Egyptians seems to have astonished the Canaanites, for they exclaimed, "This is a vehement mourning to the Egyptians," showing that it was something unusual to that which was practised among them. Now here again our narrative perfectly coincides with the custom that prevailed among the ancient Egyptians. The pictorial representations on the monuments show how violent and solemn the lamentations were among the Egyptians. Classical writers, too, furnish accounts of the great grief exhibited by the Egyptians in their mourning for friends or relations. Diodorus observes, "If any one dies among them, all his

relatives and friends cover their heads with mud, and go about the streets with loud lamentations until the body is buried. In the meantime they neither use baths nor take wine, or anything but common food: they also do not put on beautiful garments." (B. i. c. 94; see also Hengst., Egypt and the Books of Moses, p. 74.) A similar account is given by Herodotus. (B. ii. c. 85.) Diodorus also says: "When a king died, all the Egyptians raised a general lamentation, tore their garments, closed the temples, offered no sacrifices, celebrated no festivals, for seventy-two days." (i. 72.) From the great grief exhibited by the Egyptians on the occasion recorded in our verse, the place was afterwards called **"Abel-mizraim," i.e., the mourning of the Egyptians.*

When the seven days of mourning were ended, Joseph and his brothers carried the body to the cave of Machpelah and there buried it, as their father had commanded them. Having performed this melancholy duty, they returned again to the threshing floor of Atad, where the Egyptians had remained, and the whole company then returned back to Egypt.

It appears from verse 15, that Joseph's brothers feared that, as their father was now dead, Joseph would avenge the ill-treatment he had received at their hands (v. 15).

16. *And they sent a message unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died saying,*

17. *No shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee, the trespass of thy brethren and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.*

There is no mention made, in the previous history, of Jacob having left such an injunction as the one recorded in verse 17; and yet we are loth to believe that it was a mere fabrication of Joseph's brothers. They had only just returned from performing the solemn duty of burying their father, and we can hardly conceive their acting so wickedly as to connect their father's name with a deliberate falsehood. We are rather inclined to believe that the brothers may have mentioned their fears to their father, and though he himself was satisfied that their apprehensions were entirely groundless, yet, in order to quiet their fears, he left this message to be delivered to Joseph. The request was well adapted to quell the fears of the brothers, for they well knew, that Joseph would on no account disregard

* It is quite evident from the context that instead of אֵבֶל (*Abel*), which denotes a grassy place, it should read אֵבֶל (*Ebel*), i.e., mourning. There could be no reason why the place should be called the grassy place of Egypt.

the wish of his father. "And Joseph wept when they spoke to him;" this shows how intensely pained Joseph was that his brothers should think him capable of playing the hypocrite notwithstanding the many proofs he had given them of his brotherly affection during their seventeen years residence in Egypt. He felt naturally greatly grieved that his brothers should have considered that all he had done for them was merely to please his father, and that he had never forgiven them the treatment he had received at their hands.

18. *And his brethren also went and fell down before his face: and they said, Behold we are thy servants.*

The message was probably intrusted to Benjamin, whom they knew Joseph loved dearly, and to Judah, who had always acted as their spokesman. The message apparently was merely preparatory to their going themselves and humbling themselves before Joseph; "they also went and fell down before his face:" this action was the final fulfilment of Joseph's dreams recorded in chapter xxxvii.

19. *And Joseph said unto them, Fear not; for am I in the place of God?*

It would be impossible to conceive a more convincing proof that the thought of vengeance had never entered Joseph's mind than is conveyed in his reply: "Fear not; for *am* I in the place of God?" Although he was the ruler of the country, and by virtue of his office had a right to punish evil-doers, yet he would not presume to put himself in the place of God, to whom alone vengeance belongeth. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the LORD."

20. *But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

Joseph had in substance told this to his brothers on a former occasion (see ch. xlv. 5, 7,) but evidently repeats it here to set their minds at rest, by showing them that he still viewed their evil design in the same light as he had done seventeen years ago; and then adds:

21. *Now, therefore, fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.*

The promise, "I will nourish you, and your little ones" must have convinced the brothers of the sincerity of Joseph's kind and comforting words, and completely banished all fears from their minds.

22. *And Joseph dwelled in Egypt, he and his father's house; and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.*

23. *And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born upon Joseph's knees.*

The sacred narrative passes now briefly over the rest of the life of Joseph. Though he lived fifty-four years after the death of Jacob, nothing of importance apparently transpired during that time worthy of notice. "The children also of Machir were born upon Joseph's knees:" this does not mean, as many have explained, that Joseph caressed them on his knees; but that he acknowledged them as his own legitimate offspring. This is evidently the meaning of the passage, for in chapter xxx. 3, we read that Rachel said to Jacob, "Behold my maid Bilhah, go to her, and she shall bear upon my knees." It was customary among some of the ancient nations for the father, or grandfather, to take the new-born child upon his knees, and by the act he acknowledged the child as his own, and pledged himself to provide and care for it. Machir was the first-born son of Manasseh, and his name is sometimes used as representing the tribe of Manasseh. Thus, in Judges v. 14, we read, "out of Machir (*i.e.* Manasseh) came down governors." Machir had by his first wife one son, namely, Gilead, who greatly distinguished himself by valour in the conquest of the promised land. By his second wife he had two sons. (See 1 Chron. vii. 16.)

25. *And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.*

"God will surely visit you." In these words Joseph expressed his faith in God's promise to Abraham. (See ch. xv. 13, 14.) Joseph, of course, did not expect that any of his brothers then living would be alive to carry his bones up into the land of Canaan when the end of the appointed time of bondage would have arrived; but he took an oath from his brothers, being assured that it would be respected by their descendants. The promise under an oath would be held sacred, and be handed down from one generation to another. And so we find that when Moses left Egypt, though in great haste, yet he did not forget the bones of Joseph.

26. *So Joseph died a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.*

The death of Joseph took place sixty-four years before the birth of Moses, and 144 years before the departure of the

Israelites from Egypt. The Hebrew term *אֲרוֹן* (*aron*) which we have rendered "coffin," denotes a wooden chest; most frequently, however, it denotes the sacred ark which contained the two tables of the law.

We have now completed our remarks upon the Book of Genesis, and trust to the satisfaction of our readers. It has been our endeavour to make the Commentary in every respect complete. In contested portions we have been particularly careful to make our replies to adverse criticism as perfect as possible; yet should any of them have failed to prove entirely satisfactory to some of the readers, we trust they will consider the fault lying with us, and not to be regarded as admitting of no better defence, for we feel confident that all the objections urged against some portions of the Book of Genesis admit of a full and perfect explanation. We have studiously avoided to say anything that might in the least give offence to our adverse critics, although our opinions are in many instances as opposite as the poles to theirs, we still entertain the highest respect for them as eminent scholars.

We may, sometimes, indeed, have made use of language, which might probably be deemed as somewhat severe, but for which we shall offer no other apology than that we were defending the sacred Scriptures.

